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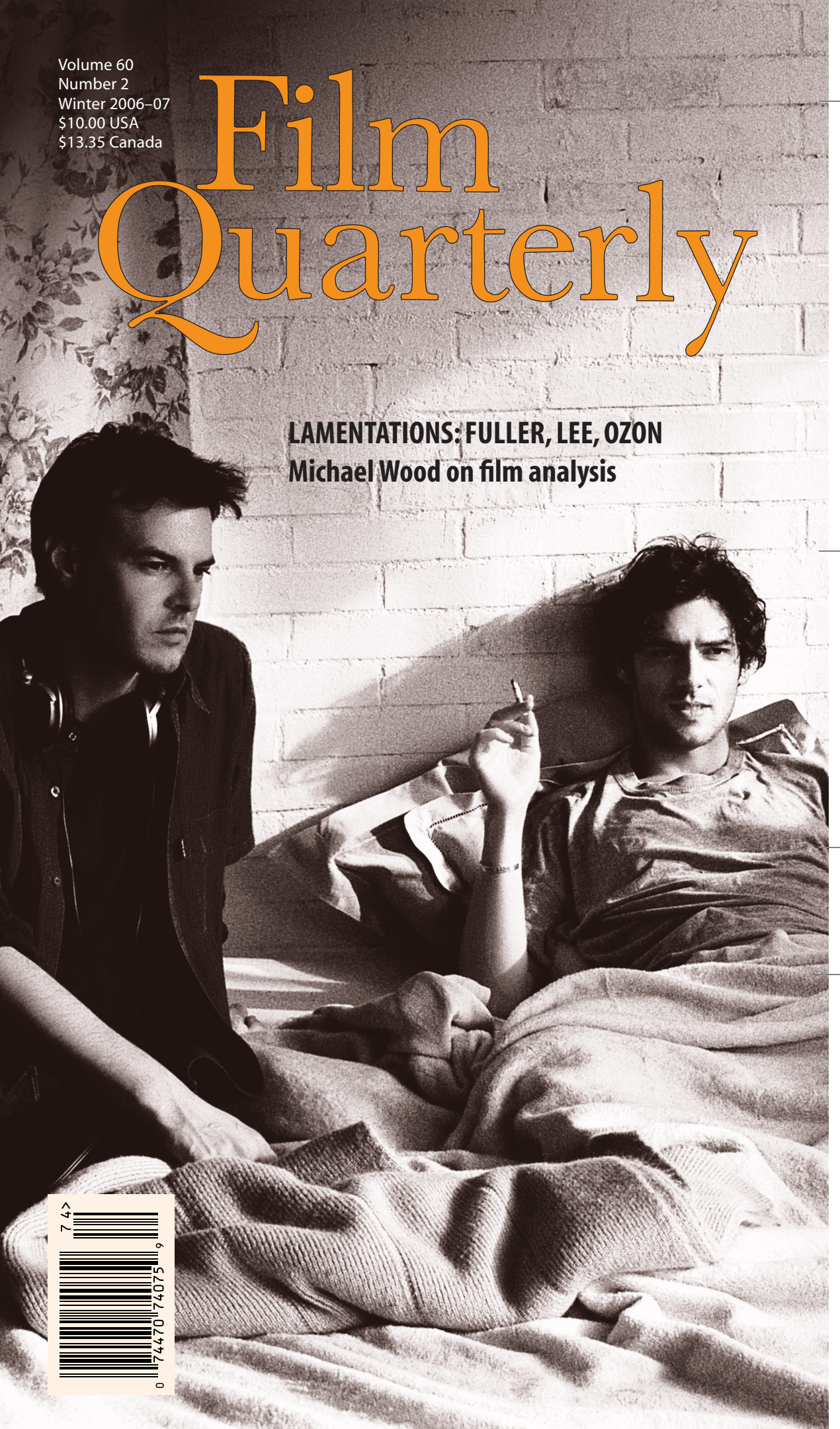

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Rob White

Treasure Tube

THE NUMBERS ARE breathtaking. Since its launch at the beginning of 2005, YouTube has grown so much that, daily, it is visited 100 million times and 65,000 clips are uploaded. The founders of the site have made a fortune: YouTube sold to Google in October for $1.65 billion. A remarkable moving-image publication infrastructure has been created. But what about its content?

The site is in part a mass-curated archive and there are excellent "holdings," for example in U.S. avant-garde film. I was able to see work by Hollis Frampton which, though well known, is not easily available, such as the precise and luminous *Lemon* (1969). Searches for Kenneth Anger, Stan Brakhage, and Maya Deren were also amply rewarded. As a kind of salvage, YouTube is wonderful. I found this to be the case especially with rock music. I was transported, looking down at YouTube's little frame-within-a-frame, by 1988 Netherlands TV footage of Talk Talk performing "I Believe in You." The appearance seems to have been the band's last and I was very moved by the sense of an ending. The Google takeover will improve searchability, making YouTube a more conventional archive. But the holdings will diminish in one respect. Despite "safe harbor" provision in the 1998 U.S. Digital Millennium Copyright Act, YouTube is at risk of being sued for hosting pirated material. It is reported that unlicensed clips are being deleted. Perhaps the Talk Talk performance will be gone soon.

On 5 November in London, the cogcollective artists' group screened a programme of YouTube material (compiled by Philip Sanderson). Without the site's graphic and textual apparatus—title, duration, date of uploading, number of hits, members' comments and ratings—one had, perhaps absurdly, to focus on the images. The screening organizers were hyperbolic: "the new online cinema of spectacle . . . a modern version of the one-reelers of the 1890s." I am skeptical. Much of the material was "shot" on mobile phone cameras. What could be more different from the cumbersome equipment of early filmmaking? The YouTube pieces are accordingly jerky, rasterized, conspicuously digital. And they are diaristic or opportunistic rather than observational, as with "Candid Camera"-style material such as "Old Lady VS. Jerk in Mercedes." An elderly woman is honked at by a driver as she crosses the road. She clouts his fender with her bag. It seems like an incident recorded by chance, but I wondered if it was in fact a set-up and authenticity is, in general, an issue with this material. The cogcollective programme featured clips from and about a YouTube celebrity, Lonelygirl15 (for an overview of her extraordinary popularity, see "Google's Take on the LonelyGirl Saga" on YouTube). It appears that Lonelygirl15 is a fake, her videos the work of professional filmmakers. Such deception is not new—Sherry Turkle was writing about the phenomenon in the mid-1990s—but it emphasizes the way in which videoblogs are better understood in terms of online interactivity than early cinema.

There is a further crucial difference. So much of the blogging occurs in domestic interiors—and, specifically, in the bedrooms of teenagers. It is a kind of amateur Reality TV and not always very engaging. I started to look for any points of interest in the bloggers' surroundings (and I was amused to find out later that one of the things that began to arouse suspicion about Lonelygirl15 was the tidiness of her bedroom).

But the cogcollective screening also included a quasi-analytical piece, "Killing time . . ." by version3point1, which made me sit up. For two minutes and fifty-seven seconds she surveys all the bus tickets, receipts, and travel passes that have accumulated in her home. We see stacks of expired tickets and she describes them minutely, dwelling on the transport company logo. The attention to materiality, the constantly roving mobile camera, and the non-psychological commentary on the clutter all disclose a rigorous sense of form, or anyway the beginnings of it. The room becomes a dynamic space occupied by objects rather than just a backdrop; version3point1 explores her environment with an artist's eye. The fact that her face is not seen contrasts with the more typical and exhibitionistic webcam diarizing. And all those tickets seem, for now, like metaphors for YouTube. Scraps, detritus, driftwood: but some of it is also treasure.

© Rob White, 2006

When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts

Director and co-producer: Spike Lee. Co-producer and supervising editor: Sam Pollard. Cinematography: Cliff Charles. Editors: Geta Gandbhir and Nancy Novack. Composer: Terence Blanchard. Production Companies: Home Box Office, 40 Acres & A Mule Filmworks. ©2006 Home Box Office.

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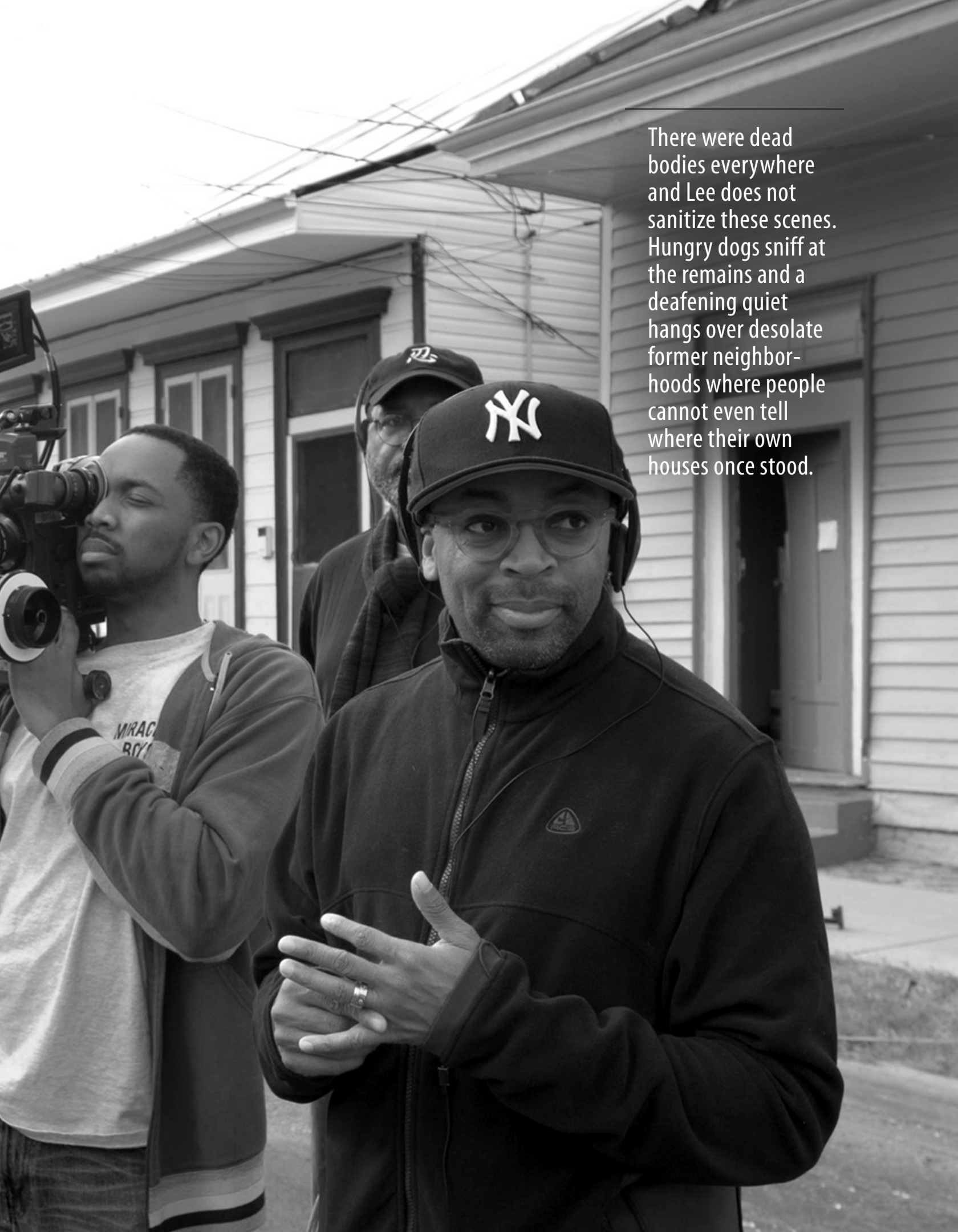
Photo: David Lee. © 2006 Home Box Office



There were dead bodies everywhere and Lee does not sanitize these scenes. Hungry dogs sniff at the remains and a deafening quiet hangs over desolate former neighborhoods where people cannot even tell where their own houses once stood.

When the Levees Broke is emotionally draining but, more than that, nobody seeing it can avoid the thought that indeed Katrina is "a signature moment," ominous for the future of the country; the film will strike justified fear into American hearts. A monumentally successful account of the human impact of the greatest natural disaster in U.S. history, Spike Lee's film is also a kind of grim mantra, an invitation to meditation and reflection. It deploys no voice of God to explain the meaning of events; instead, it offers testimonies. "I had a great responsibility," Lee has said, "to bear witness. Being a black man and seeing my people in that situation, I knew that the stories were going to get misconstrued. I was there to try to tell the truth as best I could." *When the Levees Broke* is a people's-eye view of the disaster. Working on a far broader social canvas than in any of his features, Lee weaves his multiple stories into a heart-rending tapestry of loss, anger, and also defiance. The opening dedication is to all the victims in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast: may they "rebuild, revive, and renew." Hope persists. The living go on living. As the film demonstrates through the sheer number of its interviewees, people who have grown up in this deep and subtle home culture do not willingly give it up.

But we see the almost unimaginable loss of life and property. When Lee shows us a sign marking "Humanity St." almost totally submerged, it doesn't seem excessive; soon after, we look at a wrecked house bearing the spray-painted message, "DEAD BODY INSIDE." And so the film is, as the subtitle tells us, a requiem—and in fact its audio fabric is as intricate and moving as its images, combining traditional New Orleans jazz with a powerful, mostly mournful original score to comment on and emphasize the images. Befitting this very religious city, traditional elements of the requiem mass accompany the film: lamentation (*Lacrimosa*), rage (*Dies Irae*), and mourning (*Lux aeterna*); there is also *Kyrie eleison* (whose plea is "Lord have mercy"). What's lacking, as in Mozart's own requiem, is *Gloria in excelsis.* The requiem analogy helps us define the structure of the film. Many voices combine, as in a choir; the fimmaking, with its musical form, is a kind of orchestration.

The microstructure of this non-narrative work skillfully made from such a vast trove of material offers us a lesson in documentary anatomy. Each act begins with a sort of overture. In act 2, for example, we begin with a series of shots of a traditional funeral procession moving through desolate former streets—house wreckage on both sides. We see its horse-drawn hearse bearing a "KATRINA" sign. The rhythm of the music and the rhythm of the cutting concur, their counterposed beats implicating us in the scene too. A young man walking through the neighborhood speaks to the camera of his whole history being gone: "This is what's left, nothin'" —the church is gone, the houses, the corner hang-out of the old men. Then we're back to the band with its second-lining musicians and close shots of a singer hoarsely rendering "The Old Rugged Cross," before returning to the young man, who's saying they continue finding dead bodies, maybe some are still there. "Keep it real, man," he says angrily, "the military didn't go into none of these houses." The movement between different types of shots has an easy back-and-forth, like breathing.

After this overture reorients us back into the overall story, we get into lively scenes of the reborn Mardi Gras of 2006: floats, dancing people, fanciful costumes shot in a loose handheld-camera style. There we find the man who was in charge of security at the Hyatt and is now in costume—we will hear from him several times again—saying "We *need* Mardi Gras for our healing." A woman attorney who lives in California says "Home is still here." An angry white woman parading says she's still waiting for her insurance money. The lieutenant

Photo: Charlie Varley. © 2006 Home Box Office

Photo: David Lee. © 2006 Home Box Office

Spike Lee (opening spread and above left) and composer Terence Blanchard during the filming of *When the Levees Broke.*

governor, in front of his (undamaged) house, declares that "The city's gonna live." Back at the Mardi Gras celebrations, we see a series of T-shirts, by turns raucous, proud, and satirical ("FEMA EVACUATION T-SHIRT: RUN MOTHERFUCKER RUN"). A longtime resident reflects on the terrible irony of Mardi Gras crowd trash being picked up immediately, as always, while the city as a whole still lies trashed. (The Army Corps of Engineers took four months to begin hauling away debris—a professor of engineering estimates that six months later it is only 70% cleared.) We go to Terence Blanchard, a New Orleans resident and composer of the score, who says in quiet fury that he finds this "insulting."

From the ambiguities of Mardi Gras we cut away to street scenes of continuing refuse removal, where crews are still on the lookout for bodies. We get a close-up explanation and a quick montage of house-marking codes—though, a resident contends, they "mean nothing." He remarks on the quiet of the dead neighborhood, as a piano solo mourns. And now we begin a mini-story, told by a student who was away and hoped his mother had escaped, though he hadn't been able to find her. He managed to bust through the barred door of her house and saw the eight-foot flood-level marks inside; he called 911 and police came who promptly found his mother's body, under a refrigerator. Here he lapses into a stunned silence in his account and we cut to the state medical examiner, who speaks of the horrible conditions, especially when people took refuge in attics and died there. We go back to the student and how long it took to get his mother positively identified. Then we cut again to the medical examiner, explaining the difficulties: state funding for DNA testing wasn't available until December. Finally we cut to a shot of the student at age eight or so, with his young mother, and the mournful piano returns, giving a painful closure to the story. A new section is signaled by a cut to an aerial long shot of a flooded area, initiating an examination of the engineering side of the catastrophe. This is strong, muscular visual construction and it carries us along powerfully, through the film's entire four hours.

The old song treats "Hell or High Water" as alternatives, but New Orleans got them simultaneously. As far as an outsider may judge, New Orleans has always been a tragic place: a fantasmically mixed city of the downtrodden, the poor, the black, the rich, the corrupt, the criminal—"The Big Easy." It has been the site of innumerable personal dooms; we all know what it is to ride the streetcar named Desire (and Lee gives us a brief glimpse of the actual streetcar) but out of the miseries of the city rose a unique kind of defiantly expressive joy. The people who speak in Lee's film are all extraordinarily articulate, whatever level of society they come from—and they are black and white and Indian, wealthy and middle-class and poor, educated and not, writers and historians, famous figures and complete unknowns. (We also hear from outsiders—Harry Belafonte, Al Sharpton, and Sean Penn.) The only common denominator the survivors have is pain, but they *are* surviving. In traditional New Orleans funerals (Lee's inclusion of one is almost obligatory), mournful jazz gives way to hot upbeat jazz after the body is laid on the ground—the high water table would soon expel a normal burial.

We hear the warnings that Katrina had developed to the dreaded Category 5. We see the storm-lashed streets, buildings flying apart, the roof of the Superdome coming off, the U.S. flag torn to tatters, and we hear from interviews how many people sent their willing or reluctant families away.

It has been known for a long time that the land under New Orleans is slowly sinking and that the Mississippi River is constrained in an artificial channel by the Army Corps of Engineers, in the interest of shipping traffic; like all rivers it seeks ceaselessly to push into a new channel. It has long been known that the channelization of the river has prevented normal silt deposits below New Orleans and that consequently large areas of marshy land have been washed away, exposing the city more directly to storms and storm-driven surges. And it has been known or suspected that the corps's levees supposed to protect the city, begun in 1965 yet never completed, were badly designed, badly built, and badly maintained. (Just how badly, it remained for a team of engineers, mainly from the University of California at Berkeley, to publicly reveal. After some months of dithering, the corps basically agreed—a huge about-face, encouraged perhaps by the fact that it is immune to lawsuits.)

But people willingly live with dangers. Through the film's grueling panorama of loss and folly and panic and pain, you can't help trying to make personal and

The impact of the hurricane

Photo: David Lee. © 2006 Home Box Office

social sense of it. I come to the Katrina disaster as a resident of earthquake country, California; I live several blocks from a major fault. Our neighborhood has made only fitful preparations. Earthquakes are only predictable in a general long-view way and in the meantime life goes on. Quakes strike without warning; as Hamlet told us long ago, "The readiness is all." We Californians tell ourselves that earthquake damage is usually confined to small areas. Floridians and Gulf Coast people are proud of riding out storms. New Orleans had survived hurricane Betsy in 1965 and denial is an enormously powerful force in politics as in personal life. In recent years, prosperous cities in dangerous regions such as Florida and California have greatly improved their shared emergency response systems. But New Orleans and Lousiana—starved of oil revenues though they supply 30% of America's oil and in effect are oil colonies of Texas—were unprepared and fatally dependent on potential federal assistance which did not come.

Neither people nor governments in New Orleans, the rest of the Gulf coast, or Washington DC were ready for the scope and suddenness of the Katrina flooding. When the inundation came, virtually everything that could go wrong, did. It was a massive failure of preparation, communication, authority, initiative, and human concern. Sociologists have been doing field studies of actual disasters for a long time and we know that after large catastrophic emergencies official functionaries usually do not actually function for a period of several days. (New York after 9/11 was a welcome partial exception.) Responsibility is unclear; communication fails; authority evaporates; and people just go away, as happened with some New Orleans police. Highly bureaucratic aid organizations like the Red Cross routinely take several days to coordinate themselves with authorities and appear on the scene. As Lee shows us in New Orleans, people shout for help, hold up improvised signs asking for help, but there is no help.

When the Levees Broke leads us along into the disaster carefully and thoroughly. We see the meteorologists' early images, we hear the warnings that Katrina had developed to the dreaded Category 5. We see the storm-lashed streets, buildings flying apart, the roof of the Superdome coming off, the U.S. flag torn to tatters, and we hear from interviews how many people sent their willing or reluctant families away. Testimonials abound of what the storm felt and sounded like—"a freight train in your ears for hours."

It's uncanny when we come to the failure of the levees because it happened in bright, sticky, hot weather and from a storm-induced surge, not from the worst of the storm. Indeed many residents of flooded areas believe that the loud explosions they heard as the water began to wash in were the dynamiting of levees—as had been done in the 1920s to save expensive properties. Neither Lee nor anybody else knows if there is substance to these allegations, but he documents their presence in the public mind, along with skeptical reactions. Lee's general strategy is to include a very wide range of people and stories, including reporters, commentators, and CNN's anchor Soledad O'Brien, startled on air by her realization that she and her assistant knew more about what was going on—four days into the disaster—than FEMA's chief Michael Brown.

People's fear and anger as the disaster unfolded were immense and interviewees, properly, show no tranquility as they recollect it. A frequent refrain is: "Somebody ought to go to jail." Operators at 911 could offer no help. Pumping stations were insufficient, so that 80% of the city was submerged. People were trapped in wreckage; those that could walk waded toward the Superdome or the Convention Center, though in some places the water was twenty feet deep—and when they got there found no water, food, or working toilets, only multi-generation families being "treated like animals." The governor managed to get 400 tiny boats brought in by the state Fish and Wildlife service. We see people lifted out of the filthy water in makeshift

Photo: David Lee. © 2006 Home Box Office

Surreal wreckage

rafts, on creaky fishing boats nicknamed the Cajun Navy, and in shiny Coast Guard helicopters. (The Coast Guard is the only government entity in the whole film that gets passing marks. The Canadian Mounties, we learn, were there long before our feds.) Through this terrible material, music continually catches at our hearts, as when Wynton Marsalis sings parts of "St. James Infirmary."

The film's vision of the disaster is broad and deep and anguishing. People were trapped in the supposed refuges for five days, three of them without food or water, the elderly and infirm dying. They got, as somebody says, "fidgety." When city blacks tried to walk across a public bridge to safety, they were turned back by white vigilantes with guns. Public order broke down; hungry people smashed into stores for food and there was some looting. (One guy stole a large plasma TV in hopes it would raft him to safety—it sank.) Much of the police force disintegrated. Rumors ran rampant, most of them unfounded. Bush flew over the city but did not land as LBJ did in 1965—Mayor Nagin, describing himself as "pissed," visited Air Force One and later called it a "pimpmobile." During the disaster Condi Rice went shopping for shoes. Michael Chertoff, more a villain than the inept "Brownie," refused to declare Katrina a national emergency so the federal cavalry did not show up. There was no direction, no information, no crowd control—just chaos. When elements of the National Guard not in Iraq finally arrived, it felt to many residents like an occupation; when buses came, they seemed like buses to nowhere, reminiscent of slave caravans. Astonishingly, there was actually very little crime or violence during the catastrophe itself. (People behave better in disasters than in ordinary life.) But there were dead bodies everywhere—floating, bloated, sprawled on rubbish piles, on freeway overpasses—and Lee does not sanitize these scenes. Hungry dogs sniff at the remains and a deafening quiet hangs over desolate former neighborhoods where people cannot even tell where their own houses once stood.

Gradually, with repeated visits to interviewees, Lee probes deeply into terrible personal stories, for instance that of the powerfully articulate Phyllis Montana LeBlanc, who managed to reach the airport, and Kimberly Polk, who searched for her five-year-old daughter's body for nine months. Act 3 begins with lamentations and prayers, and scenes from the new diaspora that Katrina set in motion. Scenes of devastation are accompanied by heavy, angry music: Blanchard's *Dies Irae*. We see Kanye West famously blurt out in a national TV interview, "George Bush doesn't care about black people." (The film is not without occasional gallows' humor: the Reverend Al Frampton—a model of eloquence throughout—"forgives" West, even though he's a rapper.)

In act 4, Lee's film goes below the surface of events and feelings, seeking some understanding of why the Katrina catastrophe was allowed to happen. The incompetence of the Army Corps of Engineers manifests itself humanly in the person of a corps spokesman who claims everything was done right and now has been put right again. The squabbling ineffectiveness of politicians and political appointees, including the luckless Brownie, whose heckova job we see praised by Bush, gets described from various angles. (The New Orleans people, if asked, put it more simply: "FEMA SUCKS." They were particularly outraged that acres of trailers long stood empty because nobody could figure out how to distribute and locate them.) The film holds up for examination on several occasions Nagin's peculiar cool detachment, broken only once—and inadvertently—in a TV interview that finally pierced the fog of neglect to which his city was being subjected.

We see, in short, a panoply of American life in which nobody gets the job done, a capsule vision of America as a disorganized Third World country about whose poor and desperate people nobody much cared: this revelation of the realities of class and race was and is new to much of a public fed on carefully sanitized TV news. We see in *When the Levees Broke* the hollowing

Photos: David Lee. © 2006 Home Box Office

Wilhelmina and Terence Blanchard, Phyllis Montana LeBlanc

out of the American empire which has hammered much of the working class and is now becoming painful even to the formerly protected middle class, whose safety nets are being chewed away by an army of "Go die!" Republicans. If New Orleaneans can indeed mend the broken spirit and the ruined body of their city, it will be their own achievement.

ERNEST CALLENBACH founded *Film Quarterly* and was its editor from 1958 to 1991. He is also a novelist (*Ecotopia* and *Ecotopia Emerging*) and the author of *Ecology: A Pocket Guide* (University of California Press, 1998).

ABSTRACT Spike Lee's documentary about the Hurricane Katrina disaster in New Orleans is a harrowing assemblage of personal testimonies from city residents and an indictment of the response from government agencies. This review analyzes *When the Levees Broke* as a documentary film and a powerful testimony to a catastrophe.

KEYWORDS Spike Lee, New Orleans, Katrina, documentary, witnessing

Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York

Analogue Assemblage (Nam June Paik, 2000): a typical Paik image, colorized with a modified feedback pattern superimposed

Magnetic Memory: A Day-Long Video Tribute to Nam June Paik

Tate Modern, London, 10 June 2006. 12 hours. Organized by Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York. Also screened at EAI, New York City, 25 February 2006; Institute of Television Studies, Rio de Janeiro, 2 June-30 July 2006; Itau Cultural, Sao Paulo, 17-20 August 2006; MuHKA_media, Antwerp, 1 October 2006; Dupla Cena, Lisbon, 5 October 2006.

This twelve-hour event was devoted to the single-screen video work of Nam June Paik, who died on 29 January 2006. The works were shown in reverse-chronological order. This was as fascinating as it was demanding, insofar as it required one's continual presence—the works were shown without any break—in order to see the entire span of his career. Even so, this survey represented only a minute fragment of Paik's prodigious output.

He was a mercurial figure, an arch-networker, whose activities lay at the intersection of a number of key, predominantly New York-based experimental filmmakers, musicians, artists, and activists. His video and television work falls into at least three categories: anthropomorphic sculptural constructions made from recycled, functioning TV sets; the *Family of Robots* series, multi-monitor works that expand and/or subvert the normal functioning of TV technology; and single-screen video works. Many of the projects had a high public profile as live broadcasts or as installations in banks, plazas, lobbies, schools, and apartment blocks, as well as galleries and museums.

The single-screen pieces work on a number of levels: as densely spectacular explorations of image-processing technology; as meditations on the strongly expressed tension between iconic, mass-media images and the inevitably abstracting effect of the processes to which reworking subjects them; and as documentary or diaristic records of the activities of the many important artists that Paik knew and worked with, among them Karlheinz Stockhausen, Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, Allan Kaprow, Charlotte Moorman, and John Cage. These recordings are never straightforwardly documentary, however; they always form part of a rapid montage that typically juxtaposes specially shot footage with off-air television news, other recordings, and archival "found footage," including recycled images from his own archive.

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Paik was born in Seoul in 1932. Initially he studied music in Korea, but during the Korean War his family moved to Hong Kong, then to Japan, where he completed a thesis on Arnold Schoenberg. This led him in the 1950s to Darmstadt, home of the annual new music school and festival, notable for its promotion of highly complex, minutely ordered music, championed by composers such as Pierre Boulez and for which Paik's study of Schoenberg would have prepared him perfectly: Boulez took his cue for a music of total serialism from Schoenberg's own pupil Anton Webern. Somewhat fortuitously, however, Paik met Karlheinz Stockhausen and, more importantly, John Cage at Darmstadt, during a brief period when the serialists admitted a degree of performer autonomy, of limited free choice, into their work—the performer could, for example, choose the order in which to play the sections of a composition. Paik's encounters with Stockhausen and Cage were crucial in both steering him away from the rigidities of serialism and kindling an interest in more spontaneous, theatrical forms of music performance. This approach strongly informed Paik's subsequent understanding of video as something ephemeral, mutable, and transitory. An interest in Zen, which he shared with Cage, was also important in generating an attitude of free exploration that refuses to rule out any sounds as being intrinsically non-musical and which equally refuses to order material hierarchically, according to predominant nineteenth-century aesthetic conventions. These attitudes Paik also transferred enthusiastically to his subsequent work.

The arena within which much of Paik's post-Darmstadt formation took place was the European Fluxus movement, an iconoclastic, neo-Dada grouping that stood in a similar relation to post-World War II culture that the original Dada movement had to what it saw as bourgeois art after World War I. The widening gap between Darmstadt and Fluxus can be witnessed in Paik's increasingly free use of new technologies. In 1959, he made compositions at the electronic music studio at WDR Cologne, where Stockhausen also made his first electronic pieces. However, whereas Stockhausen used the WDR studio to create short *Studies* meticulously compounded from pure sine waves, Paik created frenetic collages of sounds gathered from a variety of sources. Meanwhile, the skills Paik developed in practical electronics were deployed in parallel fashion in his video work and later facilitated his involvement in the development of an early video synthesizer.

The practice of mixing and collaging sounds is also a common component of many of Cage's composition–performances. Cage's vigorous rebuttal of western musical norms was frequently expressed in whimsical and understated ways, as in his famous *4' 33"* (1952), in which the performer sits at, but does not actually play, their instrument, or his delicate "preparation" of pianos, in which the instrument's traditional tones are modified by the careful insertion of objects between the strings. Paik, by contrast, was closer to the more forceful end of Fluxus in his aggressive confrontations, which in an emblematic piece like *One for Violin Solo* (1962) involved the violent smashing of a violin—a symbol, like the pianos which also fell victim to such treatment, of a high culture in thrall to the music of dead composers.

Paik moved to the United States in 1964 where, despite cultural differences, he shifted from European Fluxus to its New York wing, a move facilitated by connections he had made in Germany with New York cellist Charlotte Moorman, who soon became his most high-profile collaborator.

"*Topless Cellist*" *Charlotte Moorman* (29 minutes, 1995) is one of a number of tapes which recombine older works in the form of collages, in this case to create a breathless documentary that mixes interviews with Moorman on the Johnny Carson TV show with performance fragments, testimonials, and statements by Christo, Yoko Ono, John Cage, and Moorman herself. The title is deliberately provocative, ironically recuperating the media's salacious accounts of a very public moment in Moorman's career—accounts that ridiculed avant-garde art in general as well as denigrating her status as a serious artist. The tape demonstrates Paik's willingness to engage with the mass media on its own ground at every level, from the technological to the ideological.

Paik worked with Moorman extensively through the 1960s and 70s. The tape gathers documentation from numerous performances on which they collaborated, including the most notorious, *Opera Sextronique* (1967), in which Moorman stripped as she played the cello; *TV Cello* (1971), in which she plays a cello built from television sets; and *TV Bra for Living Sculpture* (1969), in which she wears a bra made from miniature television sets. Aesthetically, Paik's works are characterized by a relentless redeploying of shots and a constant reworking of images. Thus the strong narrative and the extended recordings of performance, overlaid with interview sound that one might expect from a conventional arts documentary, are jettisoned here in favor of a rapid montage of shots in which all the elements are given equal balance. We therefore see less of Moorman performing than we might wish but, in compensation, her cultural milieu and the energy of her

working life is strongly evoked in the dense mix of news footage, interview extracts, statements, anecdotes, and contributions from many different sources. The radicalism of her career trajectory is emphasized by the juxtaposition of comments by her former college music teacher with shots of her playing her cello covered in liquid chocolate.

Included in this mini-survey of Moorman's activities is John Cage's work *26' 1.1499 for a String Player* (1955). Cage wrote a large number of pieces that allow performers to decide what combination of instruments may be used. For example, *Atlas Eclipticalis* (1961–2), a piece for large orchestra, has been recorded in an arrangement for three flutes. In other words, interpreters of Cage's works may realize versions that have very different sonic qualities to those originally envisioned or performed, providing they observe the explicit performance instructions indicated in the score and that they respect the spirit of the work by taking it seriously. Paik and Moorman's version of the piece, made in 1971, involved Moorman playing the work in the conventional way, but on a "cello" that was Paik, who knelt in front of Moorman while holding a string behind his back that she bowed.

Thus on one level the piece conforms precisely to Cage's requirements, in that the title is exactly followed: *for A String Player* is taken as meaning literally *a* string. This literalism contrasts with the remaking itself, which is in the form of an event that is as much visual as it is aural. In doing this, Paik and Moorman question the hierarchies of sound–image relations and remind us that visual events are invariably experienced with accompanying sound and vice versa. An interesting asymmetry arises here, however, in that we tend not to listen in art galleries, whereas, by contrast, much of the pleasure of concert-going is visual. So although Paik and Moorman radically rework Cage's piece, they use that reworking to raise some characteristically Cageian questions about seeing, hearing, and paying attention. At the same time, the strong character that Paik and Moorman impart to the work turns it into a jointly authored piece (Paik, Moorman, and Cage) and in this sense it arguably takes on a different character, becomes a differently authored work, compared to a version in which the traditional composer–performer relationship is to some extent preserved (as in the three-flute version of *Atlas Eclipticalis*). Thus this rendition also raises questions of authorship and ownership: whose work is it now? These are questions that pertain to all art works once they are in the public domain, but are here addressed as central. The work can also be considered a form of proto-appropriation art or as a kind of quasi-sampling: certainly, insofar as it went on to form a part of several larger collage tapes, one can think of it in this way.

Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York

"Topless Cellist" Charlotte Moorman (Howard Weinberg and Nam June Paik, 1995): a broadcast TV image of Moorman

Paik was a prolific maker and, perhaps more than any other artist or composer, he continuously recycled footage from earlier work, increasingly so as his career progressed. Thus the footage from *26' 1.1499 for a String Player* had already appeared in an earlier collage work, *Global Groove* (28 minutes, 1973), among others. In his conceptualization around *Global Groove* Paik describes "the video landscape of tomorrow, when you will be able to switch to any TV station on the earth, and a TV guide will be as fat as the Manhattan telephone book."

In a late piece, *Tiger Lives* (45 minutes, 1999), footage from *Global Groove*, including that of Moorman's performance of *26' 1.1499* is again recycled, in a similarly frenetic remix. The work was commissioned by Korean television for Millennium celebrations and is the typical product of an artist meeting an endless demand for work. Such pressures often lead either to a thinning of quality, a tendency to which Cage also succumbed in his late career, or to a rehashing of old material (Handel comes to mind as an example from another age). Paik seems to have met these heavy demands for new works by this kind of creative rehashing, combined with an ever-heavier use of image processors, so that one sees a layering of material that constitutes a chronological compendium of image-manipulation processes. In his earliest works, many of which only existed as installations or on 16mm film (videotape was not at that stage readily available), Paik used crude devices such as degaussing magnets and live camera-monitor feedback techniques to multiply and manipulate the image. Multiplication is an important

part of his aesthetic, from the redoubling of the in-screen image through the use of feedback, to multi-monitor installations in which the same or similar images play on up to a thousand TV sets (or sometimes even more). In *Tiger Lives*, these techniques are in evidence along with images altered or supplemented through the use of Paik's own synthesizer, developed with a Japanese engineer, Shuya Abe, as well as 1980s hardware like Quantel and Grass Valley Mixers and more recent, digital systems. These latter, high-end commercial technologies replicate some of the processes that were formerly achieved with simpler means, but offer a high degree of control and ease of use. Paik deploys these technologies both sequentially and simultaneously so that, for example, an image from the 1970s, originally replicated with feedback, might be subjected to a chroma-key (matting) superimposition, which, in turn, is overlaid with digital "camera flare" (using a 1990s Photoshop-type filter). Thus images from the past—go-go dancers, sea gulls, Buddhist statues, the Pantheon, and John Cage delivering a monologue—are all updated or, more precisely, a technological palimpsest is created with them.

These works and many others like them are occasions for a characteristic fusing of diverse footage into an extremely rapid flow. The complex organization within as well as between shots breaks down the distinction between collage and montage. The two become interchangeable, recalling in some ways Eisenstein's extended concept of montage, in which elements within shots may form a dialectical relationship. However, Paik's dialectic is, as often as not, smoothed over through the extensive use of traveling wipe patterns, which are used to bind together disparate elements. In this regard, it lacks the dynamic articulation of an Eisenstein film and runs the risk of becoming decorative. This impression is reinforced both by the fact that it is heavily technology-driven and in the way patterning is reinforced through the multiplication of the same image. There is a qualitative shift between Paik's earlier, relatively sparing use of image processors and the later works, in which wipe patterns, for example, become a dominant feature so that transformations through space and time displace the iconicity of the image. At its best, the wipes interact with layers of imagery to generate spontaneously occurring interference patterns, as in the short opening piece at the Tate's show, *Analogue Assemblage* (2 minutes, 2000), which recycles experiments made in the 1970s with early video synthesizers. This footage is itself reprocessed using current technology.

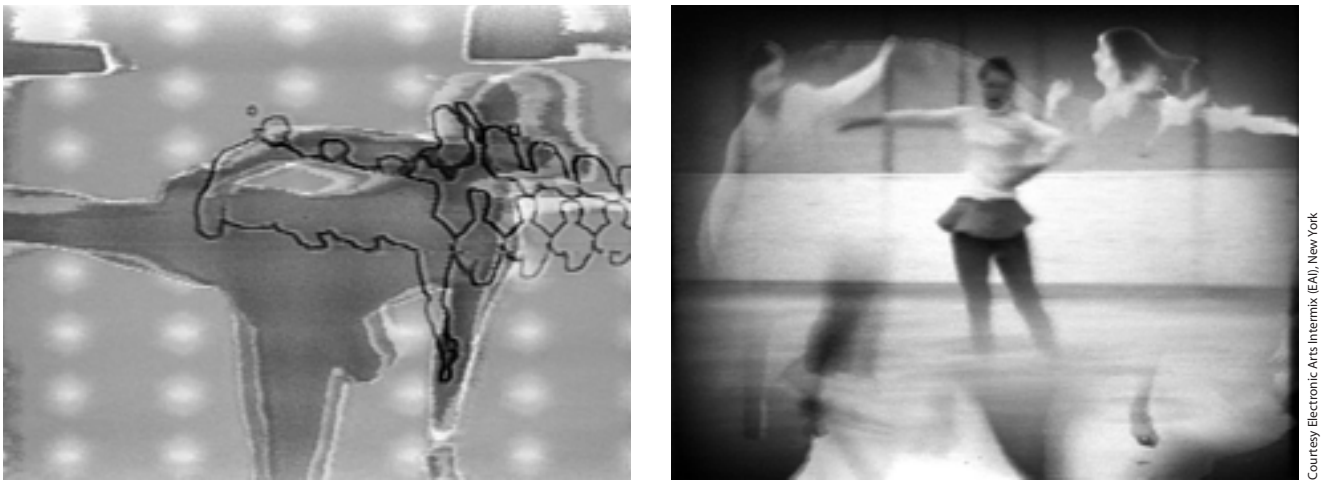
Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York

Tiger Lives (Nam June Paik, 1999): an image created with feedback, then colored and modified using a synthesizer

As artists overproduce, they reveal their limitations. Strategic strengths can become irritating formal tics when they are overused. *Lake Placid '80* (3 minutes, 1980) was commissioned for the 1980 Winter Olympics. Television footage of ski jumpers, ice skaters, and hockey players receives the familiar makeover of colorization, fragmentation, and multiplication. The go-go dancers from *Global Groove* also make another appearance, as does Allen Ginsberg, a veteran of several earlier Paik works. In its time the piece would no doubt have done admirably what its commissioners wanted, but it does not necessarily stand up as a self-sufficient videotape.

At this point it may be useful to situate Paik's approach to video by comparing it to the work of Steina and Woody Vasulka, an Icelandic–Czech couple who arrived in New York City in 1965, the same year as the Sony Portapak portable video camera and recording deck. Famously, Paik acquired the first Portapak and used it to film Pope Paul VI's visit to New York, footage of which was screened later the same day at the Café a Go-go, an event said to have inaugurated "Video Art."

Paik is often cited as the founder of video art but insofar as artists have always adopted new technologies, there is in this assertion, at the very least, a conflation between the adoption of a new technology and the development of genuinely new art forms. For every video artist there is a different take on the technology and correspondingly different, and no less novel, forms of work. The Vasulkas, who came to video from similar backgrounds to Paik, she a violinist, he an engineer, also developed technologies for manipulating the video image. However, where Paik's address is predominantly to mass media, mass audience, and iconic imagery



Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York

Lake Placid '80 (Nam June Paik, 1980): a skater superimposed on a synthetic background image using "chroma-key" (left), multiple superimpositions mutating the image

(which he rarely, if ever, shot himself), the Vasulkas' concept is based around the idea of video as an electronic signal, a stream of electrons that can be rigorously analyzed before it becomes an image. This starting point inaugurated a long and systematic investigation into the ontology of the video image through its manipulation as a signal. The British video artist David Larcher has also used cutting-edge editing systems to push image processing to a level of complexity where an implicit critique of the idea that digital media can "do anything" comes into focus: without limits or limitations, it becomes impossible to make meaningful art. Paik's earliest black-and-white video works, mostly multi-monitor installations, but also single-screen pieces, are as austere and quiet as his later work is garish and full-on. They have a purity of purpose that aligns them more closely to the Vasulkas' investigations (coincidentally, the Vasulkas also documented the music and art scene in New York at the same time as Paik and, less surprisingly, their footage appears in some of Paik's own works). Paik's *Magnet TV* (1965) is simply a television set with a moving image playing. Sitting on top of the TV is a large magnet that distorts the image into a complex parabola. Para-video pieces such as *Candle TV* (1975), in which a lit candle sits inside an empty television case, are also worthy of mention, as are installations like *Participation TV* (1963), in which a microphone records spectator noise and feeds it into the set as a video signal. This conversion of audio into video anticipates the more recent work of artists like Malcolm LeGrice, who has written about the way digital media can be outputted in any form: visual, auditory, or even printed matter.

Paik's output was protean, from early investigations into the medium to interactive and participatory pieces, documentaries, collage, and multi-monitor installations in which the images that formed part of an early ontological investigation are churned into large-scale pattern pieces. The linking thread is with the iconic image, from the Moon to The Beatles and beyond. The work is more joyously celebratory than analytical of the culture within which it is situated and that accounts for its exuberance and intensely playful visual strength. In its breathless documentation of the New York avant-garde art scene it forms a video counterpart to the 16mm diary films of Jonas Mekas. However, and especially when seen in bulk, the work too often sacrifices critical enquiry to endless, repetitive riffing that verges on the decorative. In contrast to the earlier work, the constant reworking of existing footage in later pieces points to a creative–critical stasis, which Paik attempts to overcome by sheer momentum of kinetic complexity. In this respect it compares unfavorably to the more analytical and, for this writer, more rewarding activities of Steina and Woody Vasulka and others.

NICKY HAMLYN is a filmmaker and writer. He teaches in Video Media Arts and Visual Theory at University College for the Creative Arts in Maidstone, Kent.

ABSTRACT This review of video work by Nam June Paik traces the artist's origins in the European Fluxus movement before his move to New York, where he lived until his death (in 2006) and collaborated with other artists including John Cage, Charlotte Moorman, and Yoko Ono.

KEYWORDS video art, synthesizers, new technologies, Fluxus, collage

Time to Leave (Le Temps qui reste)

Director, writer: François Ozon. Producers: Olivier Delbosc, Marc Missonier. Director of photography: Jeanne Lapoirie. Editor: Monica Coleman. © 2005 Fidélité—France 2 Cinéma—Foz. U.S. distribution: Strand Releasing.

In one of the shots from the set of *Time to Leave*, director François Ozon sits on a bed beside his lead actor, Melvil Poupaud. The composure and intimacy of the scene—the light falling on the actor's face, the folds of the bedcovers—reveal the connection and complicity between the two. *Time to Leave*, Ozon's eighth feature, is, palpably, Poupaud's film; the camera follows him with a devoted attention that underlines the pathos Ozon injects and the solipsism of the work as a whole.

Time to Leave is novel as a film about illness, with a gay protagonist, that does not make AIDS its overt subject. Romain, learning that he is seriously ill, asks if he has AIDS, but finds instead that he has an inoperable brain tumour. The film, as it unfolds, follows Romain as he takes stock of this diagnosis and puts his life in order. The French title, *Le Temps qui reste*, literally "the time remaining," refers to the interval that remains for the patient as he fills the few months, the small reprieve, he is still allowed. The more elegant English title under which the film is distributed perhaps hastens Romain's departure and increases its inevitability, losing the sense that the film charts the uncertain hiatus between diagnosis and death.

Like a number of recent French films—the work of Patrice Chéreau or Arnaud Desplechin comes to mind—*Time to Leave* is a film about mourning, response to trauma, and mechanisms of commemoration. The innovation of the film, though, is that its focus is almost exclusively on a character mourning himself and preparing for his own death. With extreme sensitivity and little of the preachiness of a film like *My Life Without Me* (2003), *Time to Leave* sets itself up to observe Romain's moves and choices. There is a sense that we just watch what happens, as Romain faces the random and meaningless calamity his illness produces. Ozon's interest is in charting a response, translating emotion and sensation into images and cinematic narrative. Here, as elsewhere, he takes us into the intimate confines of his characters' lives—charting domestic rituals, bodily acts, the affect and failures of family exchanges—while indicating all that remains opaque, untapped, for the characters themselves and the viewers of the film (recalling thus *Three Colours: Blue* [1993]). As in Ozon's previous *5x2* (2004), his filmmaking is acutely contemporary in its observation of social mores and its focus on a particular subsection of the urban bourgeoisie in France. Yet, after the sobriety of *Under the Sand* (2000), where Marie (Charlotte Rampling) mourns and revives a spectral missing husband, Ozon allows more feeling to show through. Romain may have something of Marie's monomania from the earlier film, but he is viewed with more indulgence. Falling foul of French critics—*Time to Leave* has had a very mixed reception in France—Ozon allows his filmmaking to be at moments more full-blown, risking sentimentality and cliché, as it works more bravely to rethink contemporary melodrama.

In one of the later scenes of the film, Romain speaks about his unconscious to his doctor, telling him that in his dreams they have slept together: "It was both sweet and sexual." He continues: "In my dreams I'll sleep with anyone. My father, my mother, even myself as a child." Ozon does not represent these dream scenarios directly in the film, though he does disrupt the realist surface in other ways. Yet Romain's revelation is key to understanding the hesitations we may have over what is real and what imagined and, more broadly, key to identifying the structuring fantasy with which Ozon is working. In the polymorphous world of his dreams, Romain figures himself sexually at the centre of a series of family connections, bizarrely recalling the role of the rat in *Sitcom* (1998) and also suggesting Ozon's debts, for example to Pasolini's *Theorem* (1968). Ozon is particularly astute in showing the queer tension and pleasure in the most regular relations. Two of the most delicately drawn scenes of *Time to Leave* are the exchange between Romain and his doctor, and a scene it recalls between Romain and his father, where Romain touches his father's face with consummate tenderness. The networks of Ozon's film extend from this family intensity and ensuing family ruptures out to the sheer eroticism of the scenes of anal sex and backroom s/m. This is now familiar territory in French queer cinema. The trickier issue that Ozon touches on, but quickly drops, is Romain's possible desire for his childhood self. For Ozon, sexuality, mortality, and childhood are deeply connected.

Time to Leave opens with what appears to be an image of the child Romain on a beach. Water, sand, and sky are recurring points of origin in Ozon's films (to the extent that *5x2*, with its narrative moving backwards in time, ends in the sea). The child is seen as Melvil Poupaud's name appears in the titles sequence; the back of the adult's head seems visible, but a child's face is seen in profile. As the scene continues, the character

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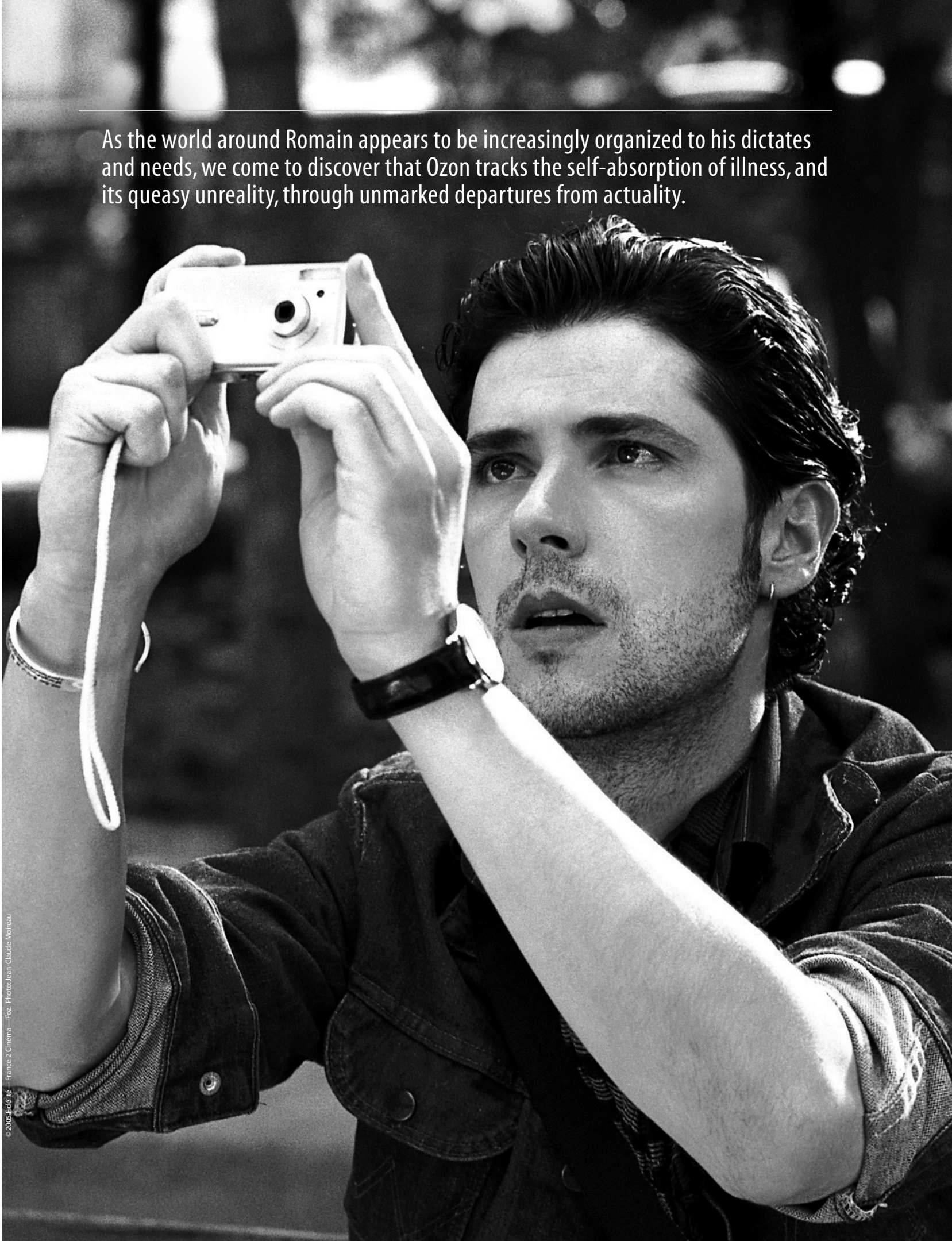
As the world around Romain appears to be increasingly organized to his dictates and needs, we come to discover that Ozon tracks the self-absorption of illness, and its queasy unreality, through unmarked departures from actuality.



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stands and walks towards the sea and there is uncertainty as we watch his receding figure. Is this his child or adult self? Ozon echoes here the close of *Under the Sand*, where Rampling's character follows an ever-receding mirage of her husband. He also conjures memories of Eric Rohmer's *A Summer's Tale* (1996) that starred a younger Poupaud, again on a beach in Brittany (Poupaud has also, coincidentally, made video and film images of himself since his childhood). In conflating child and adult personae, here in expressly visual terms, Ozon follows in a Proustian line in French culture (offering further resonance to the reference to time in his titles, both English and French).

Much of the attention of *Time to Leave* is to Romain's pain, in the face of his mortality, at relinquishing his beloved childhood self. His response to his diagnosis is to cut his ties to those around him and to focus inwards on animations of his memories and past experiences. The pathos of the lost child is itself a staple of terminal illness movies—I think of the opening images, again on a beach, of *Hilary and Jackie* (1998) or even the home-movie images viewed sentimentally at the end of *Philadelphia* (1993). For Romain, connection to his child self is seen as part of his passage out of mortal life and part of the strong regressive sweep of the film itself.

As he returns home after visiting the doctor, Romain gazes at himself in the mirror. The shot brings to mind another reference point for Ozon's later filmmaking, specifically the films of André Téchiné (whose most recent film is entitled *Les Temps qui changent* [2004]). Where Téchiné's François (Gaël Morel) may gaze at his identical mirrored reflection in *The Wild Reeds* (1994), in *Time to Leave*, Ozon's Romain, crisply in focus, looks in at a blurred reflection. Visual distortion is one of the tropes in the film, literally or metaphorically associated with Romain's illness. The first visual indication we have that he is ill comes in overexposure and blanking out as Romain (a fashion photographer) collapses at the end of a shoot. When he later looks at his mirrored reflection again, after snorting cocaine, he sees not a blurred reflection but a clear image of his childhood self. The preceding blur and his use of the stimulant open the sense that what we see within the frame derives from Romain's imagination rather than external reality. While it becomes clearer still that the images of the child give form to a wish-fulfilling fantasy, what is less clear, and more interesting, is how much of the rest of the film derives from Romain's beleaguered brain rather than his direct personal circumstances.

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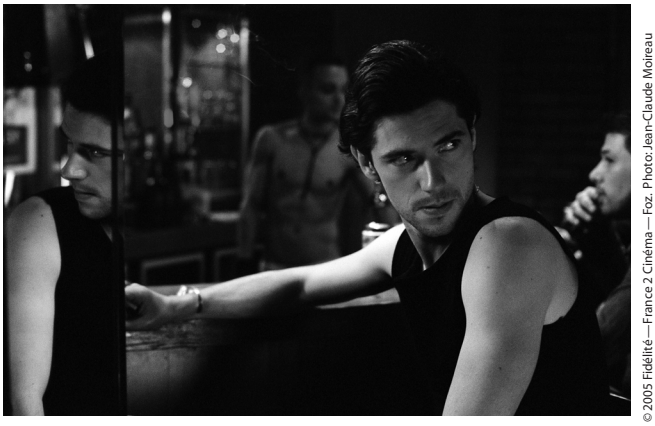
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From top: A childhood photo in *La Petite mort* (1995), the sea in *Under the Sand* (2000), Romain reflected at home and in a gay bar

Sometimes Ozon teases the viewer with these uncertainties. As Romain returns home after seeing his father, having failed to speak to his family of his diagnosis, the film cuts to graphic images of an embattled survivor moving through a video game. What seems an overt reference to Romain's perilous state—reminiscent of the more sophisticated insertion of game images in Olivier Assayas's *Demonlover* (2002)—turns out to be a view of *Forbidden Siren*, played by his lover Sasha (Christian Sengewald). The virtual image of Romain's state of mind apparently has a clear external point of reference. Yet later scenes—apparently in a realist mode—begin to seem more fanciful.

Relinquishing the chance to travel to Japan on a photo shoot, breaking off with Sasha, departing from his immediate family, Romain goes on a road trip to visit his grandmother, Laura, played by Jeanne Moreau. Moreau was missing in Ozon's panoply of French actresses in *8 Women* (2002); he gains the chance to make a loving tribute to her fading beauty in this later film. Laura, with soft lipstick and glossy hair, glamorous, still sexy despite her age, comforts Romain as none other has been able to do, holding him in tranquil images, creating a contemporary pietà. As he leaves her house, she gives him roses from her garden, which we later see faded and dying in his Paris flat. The cameo scenes in *Time to Leave*, its lovely center, where Romain finds refuge and confesses his fate in Laura's house, are lightly reminiscent of scenes between an elderly woman and the young gay protagonist in *Adventures of Felix* (2000). That Moreau recently played the late Marguerite Duras, romantically ensconced with her young gay lover, Yann Andréa, in Josée Dayan's adaptation *Cet Amour-là* (2001), increases the sense that Ozon taps into a vein of affection for aging women in queer culture (evident too in Hervé Guibert's photographs of his ancient aunts in his 2005 book *Suzanne et Louise*). But where the father in *Time to Leave* finds his double in the figure of the doctor, Laura's honeyed comfort to Romain is mirrored in the film by the attention he receives from another, younger woman, Jany Charon, played by Valeria Bruni Tedeschi.

On his way to visit Laura, Romain briefly meets Jany in a service station café. Traveling back to Paris, on the other side of the motorway, he meets her again. Here she makes a proposition that becomes a part of his exit from existence. Ozon does not fight shy of symbolism, the name Charon seeming to allude to the boatman who carries the dead over the Styx. Jany and her husband Bruno (Walter Pagano) will ease Romain's passing. It is in their tryst with him that, for some, the film will lose justice and credibility, yet here uncertainty about fantasy or actuality may surface again. The relations Romain enters into with this couple seem on one level deeply implausible; but rather than being a fault in the plot, this may be an indication of how far the emphasis has been shifting subtly from objective realism to subjective fantasy. Ozon's *Swimming Pool* (2003) used such tactics more lavishly by suggesting at its close that all we lived and viewed through the film derived from a novelist's imagination. This realization is the more disconcerting given the acute realist observations of his cinema and the smooth, coherent worlds constructed. We are lured into believing in the reality of the events in *Time to Leave*; yet as the world around Romain appears to be increasingly organized according to his dictates and needs, we come to discover that Ozon tracks the self-absorption of illness, and its queasy unreality, through unmarked departures from actuality.

Apparently Jany's husband is sterile and the couple wants a child. On the basis of the briefest of encounters with Romain, Jany invites him to inseminate her. Initially Romain refuses and returns to Paris. He tells Jany that he doesn't like children; this is borne out in his hostile response to his sister and her offspring (the querulous sibling relations that are a gripping feature of Ozon's films are no less angry here). In Paris, Romain returns to the (realistic) mess of his illness—we see him alone in his flat drinking vodka, vomiting, hitting his head against the walls of his disturbed apartment. The actor visibly loses weight, tone, and color, in an extraordinarily thoroughgoing representation of the frailty and debility caused by terminal illness; the visceral effects of the film are strong and most marked perhaps in a late scene where Romain, shedding even his own physical attributes, shaves off all his hair. Alone in Paris, diminishing, we see him masturbate and later try to reunite with Sasha for a last act of tenderness. After this is refused, the film cuts to his final assumption of the part that Jany has asked him to play.

Cutting from his rejection by Sasha to his contractual relations with Jany allows Ozon to intimate that Romain's motivation is the search for one final moment of sexual love and intimacy. The film can move away from an arguably heterosexist focus on reproduction and relations to women (escaping some of the problems that beset Cyril Collard's film about AIDS, *Les Nuits fauves* [1992]). Romain's bid for a last sexual encounter determines the way the scene is shot and how it plays; quickly it becomes clear that the scene is about sex and not just fertilization. While Jany lies awkward and exposed in her underwear in a hotel room, with her

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Valeria Bruni Tedeschi as Jany Charon

husband clothed beside her, Romain entering the scene invites the husband to undress and join in. What ensues is a remarkably tender and gently orchestrated sex scene between the three characters; Romain pays attention as much to Jany's husband as Bruno himself does to Jany. The beauty of the scene and its elision of jealousy or repression make it arguably a glorious product of Romain's imagination, a means of comfort as he faces death. While he has dreamt of sleeping with both his parents, here, in an apparently real scene which begins to take on the colors of dream or fantasy, Romain sleeps with the mother and father he will himself create, as he provides them with the sperm to produce their child.

Comparison with *5x2* is interesting here. Valeria Bruni Tedeschi explicitly links the two films. *5x2* opens with a scene with a lawyer, which is recalled in the scene in *Time to Leave* where Romain makes a contract with the Charons. The scene in the hotel room in *Time to Leave* seems like a mirror inverse of an equivalent hotel sex scene in *5x2*. In the earlier film, Bruni Tedeschi's character, engaging in a last sexual encounter with her husband after her divorce, succumbs to rape. The chill and grit of this scene as it renders physical the hostility between the characters, losing the last remnants of their love, are written over, ironically, by the unlikely tenderness of the *ménage à trois* in *Time to Leave*. Where *5x2* is already a film in pieces—offering five scenes of a marriage—it is as if *Time to Leave* has shaken up the pieces once more in a new kaleidoscopic pattern. Ozon here and elsewhere confounds expectation; in one sense, his films are increasingly familiar, yet within a series of templates he continues to produce a vision of human interaction and affect which is aptly unexpected and—in emotional terms at least—experimental.

After this sexual rite of passage—imagined or actual—Romain's journey is nearly complete. He has asked Jany if he can feel her belly when the child is kicking. The film avoids such overt contact; it is likely that Romain will have died before the child is born. But in the closing sequences, as he takes a train now to the seaside—a moribund environment, reminiscent of *Death in Venice* (1971)—he watches a woman on the train breastfeed her baby. The image conjures memories of

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Lovers in (from top) *La Petite mort* and *Under the Sand*, Romain with Sasha and the Charons

Laura's tenderness to Romain. It also takes the film back beyond Romain's preoccupation with his child persona to show him moved by an image of his baby self. The intimacy of the scene hints not at Romain's pride in incipient fatherhood—one reading shows him indifferent to offspring to the end—but at how he is retrospectively absorbed in an image of his own absolute neediness and vulnerability.

Ozon's early short film, *La Petite mort* (1995), to which *Time to Leave* is indebted, opens with the sound of a lullaby and a baby photo of its photographer protagonist. Baby photos are used as props in a drama where the protagonist plays out his love and hate for a dying father. He photographs men on the point of orgasm—*la petite mort*—and he photographs his unconscious father just before his death (only to find the father's eyes open as the photograph emerges from the developing fluid). The protagonist's anger towards his father for his emotional neglect—a theme pursued in *5x2* where the husband fails to be present as his wife gives birth—is dissolved when he finds in a box of salvaged snapshots a photograph of his father tenderly holding his baby self. Photography for Ozon, as for Roland Barthes, is as much a conduit of feeling as it is its fixing or freezing. Romain, in *Time to Leave*, is repeatedly seen catching images of the world he inhabits: his observation of his sleeping lover Sasha, recalling the young man's photographs in *La Petite mort*, infects the film at times, as Ozon shows fragmented, artistically framed shots of flesh. These photographic images are, throughout Ozon's works, a means of experiencing emotion and bringing it close.

At Laura's house, Romain revisits family images too, turning the vellum pages of a family album; a collage of these images absorbs the film as we catch nostalgic shots of a young Jeanne Moreau, of other family members, of Romain as a child. At the film's close, Romain, fairly skeletal, is visited on the beach by this childhood self. Past and present have come full circle, start and end are merged. In the time remaining to him, Romain has, on a larger scale, revisited images from a family album, displacing and acting out, in fantasy or actuality, his love for his family and, most poignantly, for his childhood self. Echoing Chris Marker's *La Jetée* (1962), an impervious boy is made an unknowing witness to the last moments of his adult self.

Despite its structural intricacy and its highbrow range of reference, I should say finally that *Time to Leave* is not an easy film to evaluate, either on its own or in Ozon's *oeuvre*. As a first-time viewer at a morning screening in Paris, I was disappointed. I found the film

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Jeanne Moreau as Laura

dark, glassy, and linear. Despite his mournful beauty, Melvil Poupaud failed to draw me in; he seemed to absorb the film's energy and to haunt its every frame. But catching the film again at the cinema and brooding over it on DVD, I have found it acquiring different contours: indeed I would say that the film gains immeasurably from intimate viewing, from close-knit familiarity. Taking a narcissistic character who resists communication and confession, Ozon risks alienating his viewer: much in the film remains unarticulated. But for me, over time, the brilliance of *Time to Leave* lies precisely in what is unspoken: in its gradual substitution of fantasy for reality; in its cool ability to continue its trajectory towards mental delusion and death. On this perilous route, Ozon approaches a range of emotions too brute, too highly colored, too cloying, for some lovers of French film. But for others, with more indulgence, his moves will seem bold and intense, and prescient in presenting the isolation and unreality, the unspeakable anguish, of terminal illness.

In the second film in a projected trilogy about mourning, Ozon articulates the fear of ceasing to be through narcissistic fascination with a child. Left behind by this child and the other holidaymakers, Romain lies on the shore, a dying effigy, as the screen fades to darkness. The film has cut each remaining link; as in Derek Jarman's *Blue* (1993), boys have departed, the warmth of the blue heat haze has been lost, and Romain, alone, faces his final annihilation.

EMMA WILSON is Reader in Contemporary French Literature and Film at the University of Cambridge. Her most recent book is *Alain Resnais* (Manchester University Press, 2006).

ABSTRACT Following *Under the Sand* (2000), François Ozon's *Time to Leave* (2005) is the second film in a proposed trilogy about mourning. This essay explores the film's meditation on a dying gay photographer's last days, discussing how it seems to blur the distinctions between dream and reality, memory and fantasy, love and trauma.

KEYWORDS Ozon, terminal illness, French cinema, gay cinema, narcissism

■ SUSAN GUBAR

RACIAL CAMP in *The Producers* and *Bamboozled*

IN HER ESSAY "Notes on 'Camp,'" Susan Sontag describes extravagant styles that produce pleasure in bad art or kitsch. Exaggeration, travesty, theatricality, impersonation, self-parody, and vulgarity characterize camp, which corrodes sentiment and good taste, high seriousness and righteous indignation. "The ultimate Camp statement," according to Sontag: "it's good because it's awful . . ."[1] Jonathan Dollimore, who follows Sontag in linking camp to homosexual artists and audiences, expounds a more gothic subscript when he demonstrates that campy lampoons of sexual stereotypes can turn into "the quintessential expression of an alienated, superficial inauthenticity."[2] Once one puts the word "racial" before the word "camp," sinister connotations continue to proliferate, as they do in the productions of Mel Brooks and Spike Lee. For the send-up of Nazism in *The Producers* (1968) and the more disturbing spoof of the stereotypes distributed by minstrelsy in its revision, *Bamboozled* (2001), depend upon alienating performances-within-the-movies that are meant to be in the worst possible taste, especially for those with a heightened conscience about death camps and the deadliness of ongoing racial prejudice.

If, as Andrew Ross has argued, "camp contains an explicit commentary on feats of *survival* in a world dominated by the taste, interests, and definitions of others," racial camp hints that feats of survival occur through inauthentic mimicry that affronts the blatantly suspect arbiters of good taste.[3] Using camp, Spike Lee draws upon Mel Brooks's somewhat different campy venture to speculate about the survival of stigmatized minorities by means of an outlandish theatricalizing of race. In the process, Lee eerily confirms James Baldwin's point that America provided an escape from genocidal violence for Jews but an entrapment within it for blacks:

> [I]t is not here, and not now, that the Jew is being slaughtered, and he is never despised here, as the Negro is, because he is an American. The Jewish travail occurred across the sea and America rescued him from the house of bondage. But America is the house of bondage for the Negro, and no country can rescue him.[4]

Celebrating the Jews' escape from the German house of bondage, Brooks derides the tastes and definitions of the racists; however, Lee, whose screen memories create a palimpsest out of the Shoah's destruction of Europe's Jews and the injurious history of African Americans, mocks the victims of racism as complicit keepers of America's prison house who prove that what African Americans continually confront is not survival after or despite racism, but the survival of racism.

Under the banner of the importance of being earnest, the Nazis promulgated a moral campaign based on exterminating so-called non-Aryans, just as earlier American organizations embarked on principled crusades based on subordinating so-called inferior peoples. Since elite and popular art forms effectively colluded in genocidal scripts, Brooks and Lee seem to say, they'll take and make schlock. After Auschwitz and the barbarism of high art, camp is king, or perhaps queen. But the task of racing camp, of camping race plays out differently for artists confronting the degradations inflicted on Jews and on blacks, ordeals which can be neither equated nor separated. Spike Lee's conversation with Mel Brooks illuminates the campy coali-

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Alienating performances in Mel Brooks's *The Producers* (1968) and Spike Lee's *Bamboozled* (2000)

tion between Jews and blacks in the racist imagination, but also the potentially campy division of labor they were made to perform.

CAMPTOWN RACES

Racial camp makes a mockery of romantic nationalism, religious grandiosity, and folk sentimentalism, laughing at Nazi absorption with aestheticized destruction. Despite or perhaps because of fascism's high seriousness, what might be more outrageously vulgar than the frenzied hysteria at rallies; the sacred mission communicated through gramophone bombast, schmaltzy musical orchestrations, stagy uniforms; the mechanized salutes and goose-steps of a fascism less fascinating, more flagrantly fatuous than the one Sontag described? From Charlie Chaplin's performance of "the little dictator," Adenoid Hynkel of Tomania, to Sid Caesar's portrayal of a resplendently uniformed German officer, who turns out to be a New York City doorman, the elasticity of what had been overblown to superhuman stature made possible a shrinking to decidedly humble proportions.

As in the 1940 Madagascar Plan, proposing the resettlement of European Jewry on an island off the southeast coast of Africa, something farcical also adheres to the Nazi propensity to conflate Europe's Jews with people of African descent. The Madagascar Plan circulated in the same year a leading German racial hygiene journal reported on "legislation introduced by Mississippi Senator Bilbo to send 2.5 million American Negroes back to Africa."[5] Up until this time, Jim Crow segregation functioned as a model for Hitler, who praised racial purity policies in the United States. In turn, "Nazi race policies were widely supported by the American [eugenics] movement as a whole."[6] In 1935, a circular on the implementation of the Law for the Protection of German Blood and Honour, which outlawed Aryan–Jewish unions, specified other illegal marriages, "namely those between persons of German or related blood, and 'Gypsies, negroes or their bastards.'"[7] Curiously, W.W. Kopp's 1935 article in *Volk und Rasse* argued that intermarriage (between Jewish and Teutonic people) produced mixed offspring (*Mischlinge*) who exhibit "Jewish-Negroid" features.[8] One German Christian Reich Bishop explained, "you can baptize a Jew ten times, he still remains a Jew and a person whose nature is alien to us, like a Negro remains a Negro and a Chinese a Chinese."[9]

That "there was no central plan to eliminate African Germans and other blacks from Germany and the occupied territories" has led to theories that their "alien blood" did not constitute a threat because of their small population or their marked visibility.[10] Neither Christian liturgies nor recurrent waves of pogroms propelled discrimination against blacks, as they did against European Jews. The profit motive behind the slave trade and colonization had no direct analogue in the costly death industry in Germany, which sought not to exploit but to expunge an entire race (though of course the money and properties of European Jewry were appropriated in the process). But German physicians and soldiers began experimenting with mass deportation, confinement, and murder in Germany's African colonies some thirty years before the Third Reich, and the first *Rassenschande* (racial defilement) laws banned marriages between German settlers and

Popular representations of the genial black slave make humor more fraught in the African American context, and thus help explain the contrast between the high comedy of *The Producers* and the tragic satire against black laughter in *Bamboozled*.

African women in southwest Africa.[11] Possibly blacks were not elevated to the status of a problem in need of solution because of the contempt with which they were regarded; such disdain is certainly implicit in the 1939 comment of Dr. Eugen Fischer, Director of the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute of Anthropology in Berlin-Dahlem: "I do not categorize every Jew as inferior, as [are] Negroes, and [thus] do not underestimate the greatest enemy with whom we have to fight."[12]

This logic would explain why one Alfred Plötz, the eventual creator of the Nordic Ring, repudiated anti-Semitism because European Jews are "more Aryan than Semitic" and then inquired, "Why is the white man more perfect than the Negro, and the Negro more perfect than the gorilla?"[13] Such a perspective also explains why the only exception to the racist but non-genocidal approach to blacks was the case of the so-called "Rhineland Bastards"—offspring of German women and Algerian, Senegalese, and Moroccan colonial troops who participated in the Allied occupation. "Die Schwarze Schmach" (The Black Curse) was protested in a 1923 poster depicting dark-skinned Allied soldiers looming over Germany, figured as a prostrate white woman.[14] Fischer, among others, sterilized, experimented on, or killed children whose mixed blood would presumably pollute pure Aryan bloodlines. Thus the Nazi specter of the African rapist programmed by his Jewish pimp.

After describing the "satanic joy" with which "the black-haired Jewish youth lurks in wait for the unsuspecting girl whom he defiles with his blood" so as "to destroy the racial foundations of the people he has set out to subjugate," Adolf Hitler adds an interesting claim in an often-quoted passage of *Mein Kampf*:

> It was and it is Jews who bring the Negroes into the Rhineland, always with the same secret thought and clear aim of ruining the hated white race by the necessarily resulting bastardization, throwing it down from its cultural and political height, and himself rising to be its master.[15]

Animalistic Negroes are only the instrument of treacherous Jews throughout *Mein Kampf*. So, for instance, if "a Negro has for the first time become a lawyer, teacher, even a pastor, in fact a heroic tenor, or something of the sort," Hitler explains, "the Jew shrewdly draws from it a new proof for the soundness of his theory about the *equality of man*," though "it is criminal lunacy to keep on drilling a born half-ape until people think they have made a lawyer out of him, while millions of members of the highest culture-race must remain in entirely unworthy positions."[16] Here, as in the geopolitical contexts Franz Fanon later analyzed, "The Negro symbolizes the biological danger; the Jew, the intellectual danger."[17] According to Keith Nelson, "in 1928 Hitler was still ranting against 'the de-Germanization, Negrification, and Judaization of our people,' while in 1930 Alfred Rosenberg, the semiofficial Nazi ideologue, was denouncing France for 'contributing to the dehumanization of Europe by means of the blacks, just as it had by introducing Jewish emancipation 140 years before.'"[18]

Despite Nazi assumptions of an alliance between Jews and people of color, laughter is raced differently by anti-Semites and Negrophobes. Presumed to be a race of scoffers, the Jews infuriated Hitler who reviled their propensity to ridicule him:

> During the period of my struggle for power, it was in the first instance the Jewish people that received with laughter my prophecies that some day I would take over the leadership of the state and thereby of the whole people, and that I would among other things solve also the Jewish problem. I believe that in the meantime that hyenous laughter of the Jews of Germany has been smothered in their throats.[19]

Whereas Jews in Germany were condemned for their skeptical humor, blacks throughout Western history were extolled for their amiability, a fact that highlights the dissimilarity of the centuries-long Atlantic slave trade and the twelve-year blitzkrieg of the Shoah. For, as Seymour Drescher has shown, the "slaves' status as property" turned their bodies into "*valuable* things," while "every Jew destroyed was a gain in 'racial' security" within the Nazi system.[20] If the Jew was a pollutant that had to be tattooed with a number (like a specimen) and eradicated, the black was a work animal that had to

be branded (like a steer or horse), then cajoled and harnessed. The nihilistic, subversive Jewish laugh should be stifled, but the black smile would be encouraged: historically the grin on a black face signals servility, a clownish desire to please whites.

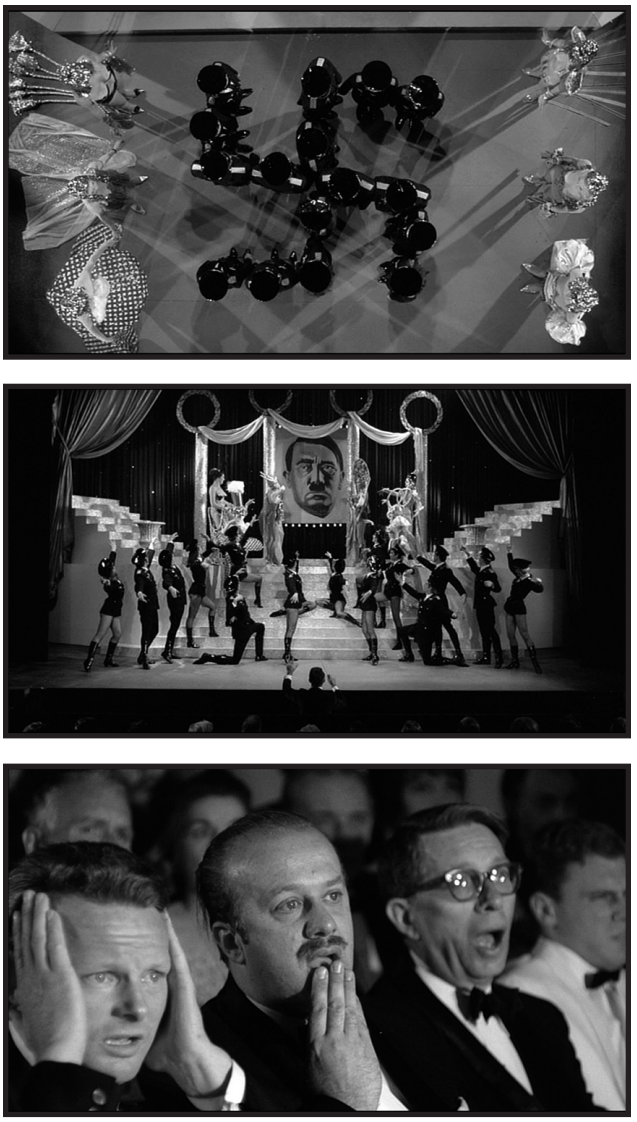
Variations of the minstrel grin, or what Gertrude Stein called "the wide abandoned laughter that gives the broad glow to negro sunshine," popular representations of the genial black slave make humor more fraught in the African American context, and thus help explain the contrast between the high comedy of *The Producers* and the tragic satire against black laughter in *Bamboozled*.[21] Lee's movie in particular deploys camp to restage racialized stereotypes in such a way as to acknowledge that the line between racist hatred and racial self-hatred thins to a dangerous edge for Americans of color, one more wounding than what Jews confront in this country. Yet given the prominent role serious fiction and film have played in stigmatizing minorities, moviemakers deploying racial camp in both ethnic traditions expose the economics and politics propelling aesthetic commodities whose pleasures are highly suspect.

CREATIVE ACCOUNTING

Brooks's and Lee's plots revolve around the determination to produce a sure-fire flop. In *The Producers*, Max Bialystock (Zero Mostel) has suffered financial setbacks that turn him into a gigolo of little old ladies whose "checkies" he extracts by playing to their sexual fantasies. In *Bamboozled*, Harvard-educated television producer Pierre Delacroix (Damon Wayans) finds himself the token black at his station, unable to convince his boss that idealistic racial portrayals will rescue plummeting ratings. Bialystock's closings and Delacroix's failed pitches motivate their subsequent schemes. Just as Bialystock determines to produce an offensive show that will fold (so he can retain the monies of overly subscribed investors), Delacroix proposes a politically incorrect television series that will outrage the public (thereby releasing him from his contract). Bialystock finds a partner in the nervous accountant Leo Bloom (Gene Wilder), whereas Delacroix gains an ally in his conflicted assistant Sloan (Jada Pinkett Smith). Bialystock and Bloom fix on *Springtime For Hitler: A Gay Romp with Adoph and Eva at Berchtesgaden* as a tasteless pro-Nazi play; Delacroix and Slade come up with "Mantan—The New Millennium Minstrel Show" as a retrograde recycling of racist minstrelsy. Much to the dismay and shock of all the producers involved, their plots backfire: both *Springtime for Hitler* and "Mantan" become huge hits. In spite of these striking parallels, it is inconceivable that Spike Lee's film could be recreated as a smash hit on Broadway, as Brooks's was, because *The Producers* derides the racist Aryans (as well as the frisson of neo-Nazi cults), not their abjected victims.

Still, the two schlemiels whose schemes boomerang in Brooks's film do perform flagrantly anti-Semitic stereotypes.[22] With his comb-over, hefty corporeality, flabby lips, and big cigar, Bialystock bribes and defrauds authors, directors, patrons, reviewers, and the IRS. Down on his luck but ambitious, this contemporary Shylock adopts as sidekick the arrested sissy or momma's boy Leo Bloom, whose decision to engage in "creative accounting" so frightens him that he must continually administer a miniaturized security blanket. When Bialystock connives to win Bloom, when they sing "Money Is Honey," and especially when they leer over the gyrations of voluptuous shiksa–receptionist Ulla (played by Lee Meredith), the lecherous and mercenary thieves could be said to step straight out of anti-Semitic iconography. Yet Bialystock and Bloom's gleeful pleasure in partnership makes them more loveable than the templates from which they were drawn, even as they gain in pathos from the historical allusions that accrue. The name of Gene Wilder's character, a clear allusion to James Joyce's wandering Jew, evokes the catastrophe of the Holocaust less obviously than the name Max Bialystock, which may reference Mel Brooks's initials as well as the producer's con—"buy all his stock"—but more obviously alludes to Bialystok, a city in northeast Poland.[23] The burning of the city's Jewish quarter, including the synagogue with 2000 trapped inside; then the gheottoization of the remaining Jews, followed by massive deportations to Treblinka, Majdanek, and Auschwitz, despite more than a month of armed resistance, reduced a population of some 50,000 Jews in 1941 to 1,095 by the war's end.

Just as important to Mel Brooks may have been the use of the name in the deceptive stage set designed at Treblinka's arrival ramps, where flower beds, a railway station with a fake clock and ticket windows, green fences, barbed wire camouflaged by evergreen branches, and the sign "To Bialystok" were meant to give the impression of normalcy. The fake realism of the Bialystok station puts on display the bankruptcy of mimesis, threadbare stagecraft set up to delude victims soon to succumb to starvation and cremation.[24] Because the only SS guard to be murdered by a Jew at Treblinka was one Max Bialis, the SS bunkhouses were renamed the Max Bialis houses in his honor (after his killer and over a hundred Jewish bystanders were of course instantly executed).[25] Mel Brooks's revenge consists of Max



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The choreographic down-shot and the dumbfounded audience

Bialystock's campy rendition of a risible and patently queer Nazism, mocking the SS's cult of virility, their genocidal actions against homosexuals as well as Jews, and Hitler's proclamation that the "hyenous laughter" of his victims had been "smothered in their throats."

Scene 8 of *The Producers* introduces its Nazi author, Franz Liebkind (played by Kenneth Mars), kissing his beloved caged birds on the roof of his apartment building (named for fascist celebrities, but a nice homage to *On the Waterfront*) and protesting to Bialystock and Bloom that he was "only following orders." A maudlin medley—"Oh beautiful, forsaken skies," "Deutschland, Deutschland Über Alles"—showcases Liebkind's inadequate efforts to hide his continued allegiance to his lost cause. The "Yankee Doodle Nazi"'s adulation of Hitler furnishes a sly comment on Führer worship and on the perpetrators who got away, even as it foreshadows a later comment from the director of Franz Liebkind's brainchild: as performed by Christopher Jewett, the effete Roger De Bris—whose last name means trash or circumcision, depending on the language—displays himself in a female evening dress, exclaiming, "I never realized that the Third Reich meant Germany . . . That whole third act has to go. They're losing the war. That's too depressing!" At the thought of chorus boys and girls in black patent leather, his companion exclaims, "S-M! Love it." Given Americans' cultural amnesia, what originally shocked only becomes grist for a cultural industry of schlock: as one often recycled jingle suggests, "There's no business like Shoah business."

Liebkind (or love child) trusts that Bialystock and Bloom will restore his hero's sullied reputation, as together they oversee the open call for muscle-building and juggling Führers. Try-outs with a balding Hitler tenor quavering through "A Wandering Minstrel, I" and a helmeted Hitler bass booming out "Have You Ever Heard the German Band?" deride the Führer's pretensions to singular grandeur as well as fascism's blatantly ersatz aesthetics. Eventually, even Liebkind will be discombobulated by the goofy Hitler staged by another deranged love child, L.S.D. (played by Dick Shawn). His drug-fried brains, Campbell's Soup necklace, and hippie "Love Power" philosophy transform Hitler into a joke, as Lorenzo St. DuBois (L.S.D.) evokes not the double consciousness of W.E.B. Du Bois, but rather the trashy daydreaming of *A Streetcar Named Desire*'s Blanche DuBois. But before L.S.D.–Hitler appears with "Er liebt mir, er liebt mir nicht" Eva Baun ("I *lieb* you, baby. Now *lieb* me alone"), the campy highlight of Brooks's movie is also the show stopper on Broadway.

Against an ersatz Nuremberg set, a Busby Berkeley number parades Ziegfield showgirls in *Volk*-fetish headpieces (of Valkyrie horns, a beer stein); then SS men tap-dancing ("We're marching to a faster pace. / Look out, here comes the Master Race!") and storm trooper Rockettes, high kicking on their chorus line, all punctuated with bouncy quips: "Don't be stupid, be a smarty, / Come and join the Nazi Party!" After a climactic down-shot of all the goose-stepping Aryans marching into a rotating swastika, the larger-than-life poster of Hitler unfurls, while columns are lowered to become cannons. Why the aerial down-shot, which breaks mimetic illusion? Viewers gain a perspective unavailable to the filmed audience, one that links Nazi martial executions and the camera work of Leni Riefenstahl's pro-Nazi films with outdated Hollywood choreography, as racial camp mocks the shoddy theatricality of fascism. The dumbfounded silence of the filmed

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De Bris in drag, L.S.D.'s languid Hitler

audience, aghast at the bad taste of German propaganda, contrasts with the glee of Bialystock and Bloom at the back of the house, but also with the raucous laughter the scene inevitably elicits from real audiences of the film and the Broadway adaptation.

Of course once the fictional audience starts to roar with laughter, camp "flips the flop" Bialystock and Bloom had prematurely celebrated during intermission. Is it significant that this moment arrives when L.S.D.'s languid Hitler performs a limp salute and then croons his love for "little Joe" (Goebbels); that "Springtime for Hitler" has been directed by a transvestite, who is in turn directed by his catty valet–partner Carmen Ghia (named for the car produced by a company sponsored by the Nazis); and that, for all their drooling over Ulla, the producers are happiest embracing and kissing each other, while the fountains at Lincoln Center ejaculate skyward? Or that the enamored Liebkind brags about being one of Hitler's "favorites": "I was the only one allowed into his chambers at bedtime . . . What good times we had"? At the movie's end, exuberant Max cures "Darling Bloom" of his inhibitions as this now-bonded odd couple empowers the furtive author of "Springtime for You-Know-Who" to dare to express a love that fears to speak its name. Schooled by queer theorists, what ideas about the rerouting of repressed homosexual desire even a novice could propound!

But campy productions discourage such propositions as silly, especially when the pace quickens and a "very sour Kraut" goes on the rampage ("You have broken the Siegfried Oath," Liebkind accuses the producers cowering at gunpoint), then bungles an attempt to blow up the theater, and finally appears in court swathed like a mummy in bandages, the victim of his own bomb blast. With its zany evocation of a concentration camp, the closing extravaganza of the penitentiary inmates in striped uniforms singing and dancing to "Prisoners of Love"—Liebkind banging away at the piano, Bloom overselling shares, Bialystock choreographing—proves the persistence of the gonifs whose vaudevillian jouissance flies in the face of a calamitous history. Though the Jews are stereotypical kikes, the gays stereotypical fags, the Nazi-in-hiding a schmuck, Brooks saves the last laughs for the gas bags who constructed the pigeonholes (though many Nazis flew the coop), as he satirizes the Americanization of a profitable Holocaust cultural industry.

THE GAGS OF TANNED MEN

Every change Lee made to *The Producers* in *Bamboozled* contributes to a searing analysis of the double binds faced by African Americans. No matter how Lee's characters repudiate, advocate, or recycle racial affiliations, they prove the fatality of a blackness still defined as base embodiment. Spike Lee refutes Brooks's faith that those who laugh last laugh best because the cultural commodification of racism proves so destructive to African American men whose playing of the grinning coon is shown to imperil not only their sense of themselves but their very existence. Even the switch in the interpolated musicals—from Brooks's Broadway production to Lee's variety TV show—escalates the societal consequences of a medium more technologically mediated, more popular, more hyped with commercials.

Brooks's producers, though down-and-out, act in their own self-interests, whereas Lee's have to cater to a powerfully alienating entertainment business. In contrast to Bialystock, who remains Jewish through-and-through (in looks, gestures, cadences) but profoundly unconscious of an ethnicity that has, by his time, become a default position on the Great White Way, Pierre Delacroix has constructed a fake French name and faux Ivy League accent as the token black at a struggling television network run by a black-identified but white Mr. Dunwitty (Michael Rapaport). From Pierre Delacroix's opening "Bonjour" to his shaved head, dandified blue suits, and clock-tower apartment, he wants to establish his classy credentials, especially as he sneers at "the idiot box" he tries to "feed" with images of "middle-class

Negroes" deemed "too clean . . . too white" by Dunwitty. Through the black man trying to act white (by which he means brainy, upper-class) and controlled by the purse strings of a whigger trying to act black (by which he means brawny, working-class), Lee suggests that African American interests go unrepresented among entertainment executives. Neither Bialystock nor Bloom feels ethnically or racially motivated; however, with Dunwitty in financial ascendancy, Delacroix has to negotiate between pandering to the whigger's adulation of black sports celebrities, rappers, gangsters, and his own revulsion against such stereotyping.

Springtime for Hitler, despite the intentions of its Nazi author, becomes a box-office hit for audiences relishing ludicrous Germans, not Jewish victims or survivors of the Holocaust. But the television revue of "Mantan—The New Millennial Minstrel Show," as floated by Delacroix, promoted by Dunwitty, ridicules black people. Its stock characters ("Alabama Porch Monkeys"), settings (the chicken coop, the watermelon patch), costumes (coons and buffoons in threadbare tux and top hat, harlequin checked pants and bow ties) derive from America's popular variety shows, put on by nineteenth-century white minstrels in blackface. Bialystock and Bloom employ wealthy queers and drop-out hippies, the familiar comic butts of farce, to mock fascism; however, Delacroix recruits two homeless men of color, Manray (Savion Glover) and Womack (Tommy Davidson) to revive the demeaning sound bites of minstrelsy. Manray and Womack are at first dismayed by the animated cartoons of themselves on screen and the huge red lips with which their characters are endowed. But, with a wary Womack looking on, the naïve Manray eagerly leaps onto Dunwitty's desk to prove his tap-dancing agility, as his physical prowess is evaluated, like a slave's on the auction block, by his white boss. Then snippets of auditions culminate in the hiring of Honeycut as African American Interlocutor: his set-piece —"To be or not to be / That is the mother-fucking-question"—typifies the garbled Shakespeare performed by blackface actors, but it also poses the central question minstrelsy stages for African Americans erased and defaced by the blacked-up white men portraying them as dim-witted losers and fools: that is, "do I continue in this performative hell, or do I commit suicide?"

When outraged silence translates into outrageous hilarity at *Springtime for Hitler*, Bialystock is proven right in trusting the audience to share his abhorrence of any glorification of The Third Reich; but Delacroix will be disabused of his assumption that racist scripts have been disavowed. White members of "Mantan"'s television audience do take their cue from blacks; once blacks start guffawing at the staged buffoonery, though, it is with some relief that whites join in. With Savion Glover impersonating Manray masquerading as Mantan, Tommy Davidson playing Womack performing Sleep-n-Eat, "two real coons" stage racial inauthenticity: contemporary black artists replay the rubber-lipped, happy-go-lucky, dumb-as-dirt darkies on minstrelsy's slave plantations. Spliced with footage of Amos 'n Andy as well as Mantan Moreland and Burt Williams, Delacroix's show gives us African American tap dancers and comics blacking up to impersonate white men who were masquerading as black caricatures. Lee seems to ask, if historically African American entertainers could only gain access to the stage by pandering to audiences as blacks in blackface skits, have times changed?

But the charisma of Savion Glover and Tommy Davidson make "Mantan" more than a statement about the historic racism that infiltrates visual imagery from *The Birth of a Nation* (1915) and *The Jazz Singer* (1927) to contemporary sitcoms. Because of their magnetism, the television-show-within-the-movie illustrates the vertiginous ironies of racial camp. Accompanied by the catchy melodies of a prison-garbed, ball-and-chained band, the stars' brilliantly timed repartee (as they complete each other's interrupted patter) and the ensembles of elegant heel-and-toe shuffles (with Topsie, Rastas, Little Jim Nigger, Uncle Ben, and Aunt Jemima, costumed in familiar tatters and head-rags) are especially eerie. Are Lee's stars degraded by the white-authored stereotypes they recycle or do they satirize the whites who sponsored these spurious caricatures? According to Manthia Diawara, "the New Blackface" of African American artists manages "to stereotype the stereotype," enabling "the performer to fill all the spaces that the old stereotype occupied and to be the star of the new show."[26] Still, in direct contrast to *The Producers* (where a filmed audience stunned at the "bad taste" of the production is finally won over to the laughter first produced in the real audience), the wildly enthusiastic filmed television audience in *Bamboozled* contrasts with its critics' distress.

The television audience's hilarity not at the victimizers but at the victims takes on pathos through the anguish filmed backstage—as cork burns in alcohol, foreheads or cheeks are smeared as if tarred, lips enlarged and circled with red lipstick, fright wigs and white gloves adjusted. Lee repeatedly juxtaposes the multiply mirrored actors swabbing sooty paste over protective coco butter with the slapstick routines on stage. While the distance between Manray and Mantan, Womack and Sleep-n-Eat widens, we are presented

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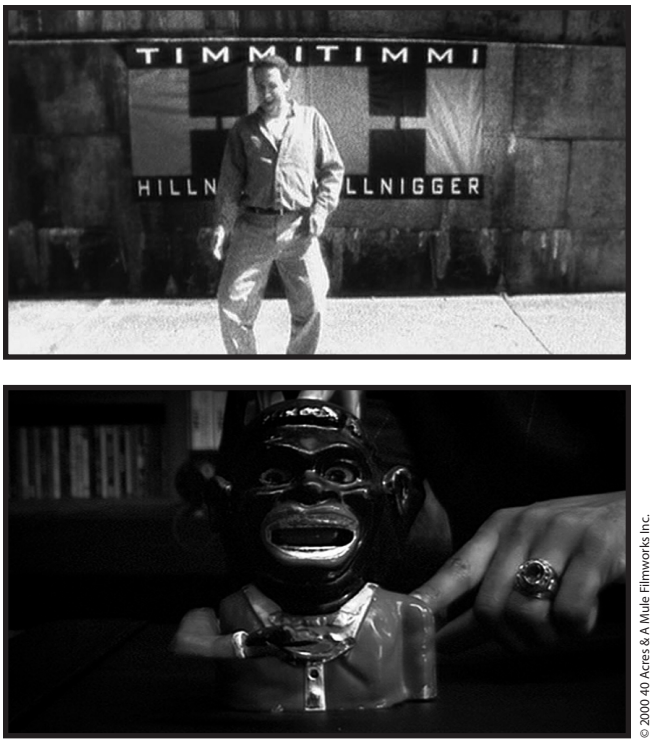
Womack's backstage anguish

with a poignant riff on the significance of Manray's name, which evokes the surrealist photographer Man Ray, famed for tackling the competition between African and Greco-Roman aesthetic canons. Du Boisean double consciousness is put on display when tears slip down Womack's begrimed visage backstage, while on stage, he mumbles, "I don't know who I is." Womack, finally determined to leave the show, dramatizes his sense of self-division to Manray by slowly passing his hand over his face, then assuming the "Yah Massa" look of dumb acquiescence. Putting on a face to meet the faces of their viewers, the inventive artists are reduced to puppets, with all the resulting rage and self-division such impotence must effect in the psyche of each performer, eventually causing the actors to become just as perplexed as Delacroix. For black performers, Lee hints, commercial success spells aesthetic and psychological distress, the demise of artistic and affective integrity.[27]

Debased as are the stupid, lazy Mantan and Sleep-n-Eat caricatures, their previously indigent actors gain apartments and wardrobes through mimicry that proves it's better to play the coon than to be the coon, though Womack eventually steels himself to quit "the same bullshit, just done over." Paradoxically, the Mau Maus, militant gansta rappers who condemn the oppressive stereotypes buttressed by televised minstrelsy, cultivate mind-obliterating drinking and drugs, Ebonics, and violence that condemn them not only to play but to be contemporary America's coons. At the apocalyptic conclusion of *Bamboozled*, when these thugs—spouting Afro-centric rhetoric—kidnap Manray and, as Tavia Nyong'o puts it, "set him dancing again to the rhythm of their gunfire," his bullet-riddled tap dance epitomizes the deathly artistry that dooms Americans of all races to become voyeuristically invested in forms of entertainment that constitute violence against the black male body.[28] Whereas Mel Brooks's Broadway producers end up launching theatrical scams inside the jail to which they have been confined, "Mantan"'s star ends up murdered by the Mau Maus, who are themselves shot down by the police (except for the one light-skinned member who plaintively asks "Why didn't you kill me, too? I'm black!"); its producer, Delacroix, is killed by a baffled but enraged Sloan, whose affections have turned against her sell-out partner and toward the increasingly politicized but doomed Manray. If genocide signifies denationalization and selective mass murder, the absurd cartoon Africa has become (as a national identity for the gansta rappers) and all the murdered black bodies constitute an African American Holocaust.

That the execution of Manray is broadcast live on the Internet and the boob tube underscores the critique of voyeurism and consumption Lee extends through his satiric advertisements against, for instance, "Timmi Hillnigger," who milks big bucks from impoverished ghetto kids for name brands that raise his stock, but lower theirs. Only Delacroix's father, who refuses to do standup comedy except in black clubs, manages to hang on to his integrity, although his son believes the father thereby dooms himself to obscurity. Yet a farewell bit of tipsy paternal advice—"Keep 'em laughing"—hints that the two are doubles, doomed to be the laughing stock of corporate America. A grotesque joke told by Delacroix's father—about a nun who reaches for a knife to widen the corners of her mouth when she hears about an escaped black convict—braids the fantasy of the black buck with a dream of revenge against the



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Lee's critique of voyeurism and consumerism

female orifice, another veiling of black male impotence. As if to emphasize the greater complicity of and danger to men in a culture modeled on minstrelsy, Spike Lee's heroine murders Pierre Delacroix amid the kitschy Sambos he has begun collecting in his apartment: intraracial violence between black men and women, Lee suggests, has everything to do with a dehumanization minstrelsy enacted mostly on men.

Eventually critical of her own collusion in an emasculating industry, Sloan has misused her education to produce authentic burnt cork and to introduce Delacroix to black collectables like the "Jolly Nigger Bank" that swallows coins into its mechanized mouth.[29] As the cast iron bank takes on an agency of its own, ramming money through its bloody lips, its animation denotes the inanimate figurines made of black actors choking on the lines they have been force fed in order to "feed the idiot box." To circle around the expression "gag," a pun related to Ralph Ellison's famous word play on "joke" and "yoke," *Bamboozled* uses huge lips as a proscenium on the TV set and stills of grinning red open lips.[30] Delacroix is therefore Lee's most perplexed portrait of himself as a filmmaker, reflecting the director's awareness of his movie's inevitable complicity in minstrelsy's degradations which are documented in the scenes and images at its close.

After the appearance of the impresario Honeycut, before an ebullient audience of blacked up and self-proclaimed African and Euro-American "niggers," *Bamboozled* connects laughter with the slaughter of African American men—Manray, the Mau Maus (including Sloan's brother, who has adopted the name "Big Blak Africa"), finally Pierre Delacroix, now himself in blackface—and with a collage of celluloid monkeys, pop-eyed Toms and Jemimas, movie clips of Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney in burnt cork, prancing Bojangles and stammering Rochester, all of whom "Keep 'em laughing." Honest Abe Honeycut's shtick—"Four score and several years ago, they waz kickin' our black asses"—proves how long ago the disaster of slavery was supposedly put to an end, yet how long its repercussions have continued to reverberate. It is hard to know who is being satirized in Lee's recycling of minstrelsy: the white and black audiences who are released by camp to enjoy the degrading gags of minstrels, the black entertainers who make money from these gags, or the whites who own the whole show and make even more money on the gagging of African Americans.

LAUGHING STOCK

After one victim of the Nazis, Edward Stankiewicz, became *Totenschreiber* (death-writer) at the hospital in Buchenwald, he began thinking about the theatricality of race, partly because he was a Jew impersonating a Pole throughout his internment. In an insightful comment on the soul murder triggered by blackface, Stankiewicz—who put on a minstrel show inside the concentration camp—described the only remedy in its hospital for "the scourge of dysentery," which was charcoal:

> [O]ne could tell the victims by the black smudges covering their mouths or entire faces. They reminded me of the clowns I used to see as a boy in the Warsaw circus who had painted their faces black or red depending on whether they were imitating a Negro or an American Indian. The black smudges made the sick look funny and pathetic. But in the middle of their faces were eyes glowing like dying cinders, expressing anger, despair, or total resignation.[31]

Even satirized in "Mantan," minstrelsy's paraphernalia brim with meanings that reinscribe degradation, whereas Brooks's camp annuls Jewish abjection and Nazi glamor. Given the malevolent history both directors confront, Brooks's movie appears more optimistic

than Lee's: while *The Producers* delights in fallen, faux fascists performing on a stage that camp turns into a metaphor of antic inanity, *Bamboozled* broods over fallen, faux darkies prancing on a set that camp turns into a metaphor of death.

The posters by Michael Ray Charles, which appear in various settings of *Bamboozled*, exploit racial camp as Lee does: Charles's brightly colored mock-advertisements feature grinning, pop-eyed darkies in head rags or corn rows selling quintessentially American products, physical and metaphysical. Nineteenth-century minstrelsy, which made slaves figures of fun, and its spin-offs, which make its descendants funny today, explain the gruesome mirth on the faces of Lee's and Charles's advertising entertainers, who prove that "the Negro" is "despised" as a coon in what Baldwin termed America's "house of bondage." Lee aligns himself with artists like Michael Ray Charles, Robert Colescott, and Kara Walker, all of whom present the caricatured face of grotesquely embodied Buckwheats, Dusky Wenches, Mammies, Zip Coons, and Tar Babies as a "disgrace to the race" (in the words of protest spoken by Al Sharpton and Johnnie Cochran in *Bamboozled*). Their Jewish American counterparts are the artists who exhibited in the Jewish Museum's show *Too Jewish?*, with its tongue-in-cheek portraits like Hannah Wilke's *Venus Pareve*, Deborah Kass's *Jewish Jackies*, Dennis Kardon's *Jewish Noses*, and Neil Goldberg's *Kings of Comedy* (each inscribed on a matzoh).[32] Yet neither Brooks (with his conniving Bialystock and momma's boy Bloom) nor the artists featured in *Too Jewish?* suggest that contemporary American Jews find albeit disturbing ethnic stereotypes threatening to the survival of Jewish men and women. For Brooks, racial camp laughs at genocidal powers to tell his audience that we are neither its agents nor its victims; for Lee, laughter implicates us—black and white—in genocidal forces producing travesties that continue to amuse and enslave us.

As if to justify hilarity, Mel Brooks once explained, "if your enemy is laughing, how can he bludgeon you to death?" to which Lee seems to rejoin, if you are laughing, how can you defend yourself against being bludgeoned to death by your enemy?[33] Their disagreement underscores an ambiguity in Baldwin's famous pronouncement: the Jew, according to Baldwin, "is never despised here, as the Negro is, because *he* is an American" (emphasis mine). The "he" who "is an American" can refer to the Jew or the Negro. The Jew is not despised because he has become a fully integrated and franchised American citizen; the Negro is despised because, though born in America, he has not become a fully integrated and franchised citizen. Since the Shoah occurred over there and back then, while racial discrimination perpetuates the consequences of the Middle Passage here and now, the Holocaust is memorialized (as an American source of pride), slavery is recycled (as an American source of shame), and racial inauthenticity—which can function as a liberating source of amusement for Jewish American men—operates for African American men as an ongoing denigration (as the etymology of that word demonstrates). In accord with Baldwin's pronouns, neither Jewish nor black women play anything but highly conventional roles in *The Producers* and *Bamboozled*—as sex objects or ethical instructors—a commonality in the movies suggesting that (at least historically speaking) racial camp (like camp itself) has a gender, which is male.

For Brooks and Lee, the voyeurism induced by popular visual forms blocks compassion, as it did more malevolently in Nazi Germany, for the arts as depicted in both movies foster national cohesion at the expense of comprehension and do so by creating a laughing stock on and in the stage.

Yet that two Jewish producers would undertake the project of staging upbeat Nazi propaganda, even though they expect opening night to close the show, and that they would do so for money: in this respect Brooks's plot is just as bleak as Spike Lee's about the mediocrity, profit motive, and vulgar tastes governing the entertainment industry.[34] Both Brooks and Lee direct films about campy stage and screen productions to tackle the culture industries Adorno lambasted: with an audience reconfigured into customers, with economic profit foremost in the minds of producers selling commodities in the marketplace, *Springtime for Hitler* and "Mantan" fail to fail. Like *The Sound of Music* (1965) and *The Jerry Springer Show* (both the TV show and the opera based on it), *Springtime for Hitler* and "Mantan" use shoddy showmanship to package traumatic historical and personal injuries now "completely reified and mediated."[35] The Shoah and the slave trade are disseminated through misinformation in the service of conformity to Americans' investment in self-congratulatory

narratives of liberty and justice for all. Unified in their hilarity, the represented audiences of *Springtime for Hitler* and "Mantan" regress through a repression of the dangers both calamities clearly evidence and in the process gain a pleasurably complacent sense of self-satisfaction. For Brooks and Lee, the voyeurism induced by popular visual forms blocks compassion, as it did more malevolently in Nazi Germany, for the arts as depicted in both movies foster national cohesion at the expense of comprehension and do so by creating a laughing stock on and in the stage.

Through the outdated extravaganzas of minstrelsy, of Ziegfield and Busby Berkeley, camp proves that history repeats itself, recycling the theatricalized past in the present and thus imbuing contemporary culture with anachronistic fantasies. The motifs Esther Newton finds in the camp of drag queens—"*incongruity, theatricality,* and *humor*"—operate throughout Brooks's and Lee's productions, although laughter at racial injustice often teeters on the edge of pathos at a stigmatization that could easily dissolve into maudlin self-pity or futile rage.[36] Since racial camp intimates that less conscious performances off stage are just as scripted as more contrived performances on stage, the suspect categories of Aryan and Jew, white and black multiply until reification unmasks their ludicrous artifice as well as their weird staying power. Denaturalized (on as well as off stage), masquerading Aryans and Jews, blacks and whites demonstrate the fictitiousness of racial categories that nevertheless proliferate through such recreations. By means of flagrantly fabricated and mocked masculinities, camp queers race with tongue-in-cheek exaggerations that portend the dawning of yesterday, as parodic performances recycle the dated ideologies they spoof.[37]

In the once-a-Jew-always-a-Jew, once-a-black-always-a-black racial economy of Aryan nations that vilified Jewish brains, black brawn, neither racial affiliation nor racial disaffiliation offered an escape route. But even when the subversions of racial camp reinstate debilitating stereotypes, its practitioners thumb their noses at any serious positing of racial or sexual, ethnic or national difference. Racial camp deflates what had been magnified, mocking the so-called master race, especially its purgative efforts to expel scapegoats; it highlights as farcical the historic conflation of Europe's Jews with people of African descent; it untangles the difference between exterminating all the brutes and subordinating them; it snickers about the color of laughter. As do many less comedic instances in the long history of Jewish–black dialogues, Spike Lee's conversation with Mel Brooks leaves us with an admonition: the toxicity of the United States for African American men—manifest in unemployment, criminalization, poverty, drugs, drop-out, and mortality statistics—has everything to do with a cultural industry that is no laughing matter.

NOTES

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SUSAN GUBAR is Distinguished Professor at Indiana University. She is the author of *Rooms of Our Own* (University of Illinois Press, 2006), *Poetry after Auschwitz: Remembering What One Never Knew* (Indiana University Press, 2003), and *Racechanges: White Skin, Black Face in American Culture* (Oxford University Press, 1997).

ABSTRACT In *Bamboozled* (2001), Spike Lee extends Mel Brooks's camping of race in *The Producers* (1968), but how do their movies illuminate racial history? Taken together, both spoof American cultural industries, even as they prove that America provided an escape from genocidal violence for Jews but an entrapment within it for blacks.

KEYWORDS minstrelsy, Holocaust, cultural industries, genocide, farce

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■ MARSHA ORGERON

LIBERATING IMAGES?

Samuel Fuller's Film of Falkenau Concentration Camp

Courtesy of Academy Film Archive, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

A glimpse of Samuel Fuller on one of the 16mm reels he shot during WWII

8-point Goudy, Widescreen Pica gauge,
Moviola—reporter and film director spill blood
on the same emotional battlefield of what is fit
to print, and what is fit to film.

—*Samuel Fuller*[1]

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ON 9 MAY 1945, THE DAY after V.E. Day, future maverick Hollywood director Samuel Fuller shot a twenty-two-minute film recording the aftermath of the liberation of Falkenau, a Nazi Concentration camp in Czechoslovakia.[2] He used a 16mm Bell & Howell camera that his mother sent him while he was overseas during World War II as a soldier in the 1st United States Infantry Division, colloquially known as the "Big Red One."[3] In his posthumously published autobiography, *A Third Face* (2002), Fuller explains that he was asked by his battalion commander, Captain Kimble R. Richmond, to "film the gruesome spectacle" of burial preparations for the camp victims' emaciated bodies, which had been "thrown on top of each other like newspapers" (217). Also present were the near-dead who "raised their bald heads and looked at us, eyes sunken in anguish, their mouths agape, a hand here and there reaching out, grasping for anything, begging us for assistance in helpless silence" (214). Fuller's newspaper metaphor invokes his journalistic background and acknowledges that the corpses represented unseen and untold stories. In the wake of the Nazi violation of decency and humanity, what was fit to print—or to film for that matter—was in the process of being revised.

Fuller's Falkenau film contains images that would haunt the filmmaker throughout his life and career, emerging most obviously in the film that revisits Fuller's war experiences, *The Big Red One* (1980). It is not, however, only Fuller's semi-autobiographical film that deals with the witnessing of traumatic incidents. Many of Fuller's movies are about characters who see or experience something painful, damaging, terrifying, or incomprehensible, which they struggle with and often fail to make sense of. Fuller's fascination with bearing witness is evident in the journalistic career that preceded his military service as well as in the amateur footage he shot during the war. Fuller, in fact, framed his decision to enlist in terms of his interest in being a documentarian: "I had a helluva opportunity to cover the biggest crime story of the century," Fuller wrote, "and nothing was going to stop me from being an eyewitness" (105). Fuller's film of Falkenau, however, suggests that what the nascent director found was more than just an opportunity to see things for himself.

Like other liberation footage, Fuller's film does not capture the full horror of the concentration camps. Such films, as Nicolas Losson has demonstrated, can necessarily record only the aftermath of atrocity, a particular moment in the lifeline of the camp.[4] The film focuses on the burial ritual for the camp's victims as well as on the "respected townspeople" (215) of Falkenau, who were compelled by Captain Richmond to "appear at the gates of the camp the next morning or face a firing squad" (216) to watch the proceedings along with the liberating division, the camp's survivors, and Fuller's camera. The townspeople were obliged to act as witnesses—a measure taken to ensure that those who professed ignorance of what had happened inside the camp would see the evidence of Nazi brutality for themselves—and as participants who helped "prepare the camp's victims for a decent funeral" (217). These individuals were, in other words, watching the victims of the Nazi camp and each other; but they were also on display, performing, all in the context of this ritualistic attempt at restoring posthumous dignity to the camps' victims.

This scenario of participation and witnessing is repeatedly played out, albeit in different guises, in other films of camp liberations and in newsreels that made their way to theaters worldwide in the spring of 1945. In *Frontline: Memory of the Camps* (1985), the PBS broadcast name given to a never-completed 1945 documentary with footage shot by British and American cameramen, SS guards are shown digging graves and handling bodies, and local townspeople are brought in to watch the proceedings and to study the proof of camp abuses, all evidencing the prevailing philosophy articulated by the film's narrator: "It had to be seen to be believed."[5] Jeffrey Shandler notes the importance of witnessing as a theme in the liberation newsreels:

> [T]wo kinds of images predominate in the newsreels: In addition to shots of the camps' former inmates, both the living and the dead, are scenes that document local Germans being forced to witness the camps' conditions and the fate of their victims. The latter include footage of Allied soldiers compelling German civilians and military prisoners to behold piles of corpses . . . There are also scenes of Germans' compulsory participation in burying or reburying the dead . . .[6]

Fuller's film of Falkenau, then, is one of many such documents that fit into the genre of liberation footage. It is also, however, an unusual film in terms of its careful, formalistic orchestration.

Despite a significant body of critical work about Fuller and especially about his interest in the subject of war, this amateur footage has received only occasional, passing acknowledgment.[7] What follows here is an attempt to remedy this gap. As Janet Walker notes, "we have an ethical and political obligation to remember, acknowledge constantly, and deal with the aftermath of traumatic events" while also realizing that "these events are subject to interpretation as they are experienced, reimagined, reported, written down, and visually com-

municated."[8] Fuller's record of trauma—that of the camp's victims, the camp's survivors, the camp's neighbors, as well as his and the other liberating soldiers'—functions simultaneously as documentation and interpretation. His experience of witnessing, filming, remembering, and also revising his memory of this event enriches our understanding of World War II and Holocaust representation. Because it is an immensely personal document, the film also functions as a valuable artifact of one of the director's formative war experiences, one that would, as he put it in reference to another traumatic act of witnessing (seeing the severed head of another soldier), remain "imprinted on my mind like a leaf in a fossil, never to fade away" (114).

The need for witnessing and recording was a matter of policy during the final Allied sweep through Nazi territory at the conclusion of the European segment of the war. Following a high-profile visit on 12 April 1945 from Generals Dwight Eisenhower, George Patton, and Omar Bradley to the first American liberated Nazi Camp—Ohrdruf (a Buchenwald subcamp)—the call to document Nazi atrocities went out to journalists and members of Congress. Evidence was needed for future war-crimes trials, but it was equally understood that a documentary archive of proof was imperative for the education of Germans and the rest of the world about the human destruction wrought by National Socialism. Consequently the military—both officially through the Army Signal Corps and, in the case of Fuller and other amateur cinematographers among enlisted ranks, somewhat more informally—began to shoot footage that evidenced Nazi barbarism.[9]

As Shandler makes clear, Eisenhower "was at the forefront of establishing the act of witnessing the conditions of recently liberated camps as a morally transformative experience."[10] The narrative which unfurls in Fuller's footage is precisely one of painstaking witness-bearing to the denouement of the war, to the reasons for fighting it laid out in unsparing detail, and to the edifying, if equally punitive, act of bystanders (in every sense of the word) being forced to confront the reality of what had been done. Fuller realized the importance of showing these living, witnessing subjects, writing that his "twenty minutes of 16-mm film had recorded the sober reckoning of those civilians" (217). The idea of a "sober reckoning" makes it clear that Fuller had a certain degree of faith in the potentially humanizing and perhaps even redemptive consequences of seeing firsthand the evidence of Nazi abuses. Shandler observes a related moral imperative in viewing the graphic newsreel footage of camp liberations, which "codifies the act of witnessing for American audiences as unpleasant, shocking, repulsive, yet arousing, compelling, necessary, and ultimately redemptive."[11]

Discussing *The Big Red One* (1980)—which represents, as he puts it, "fictional life based on factual death"[12]—Fuller explains that writing the novel and making the film was "how I ultimately came to grips with my experiences" (122). I want to consider this statement in the context of Fuller's film of Falkenau, which Fuller claims he put away upon his return to the United States in the fall of 1945 and never took out again because "it would be too painful to watch, bringing back all the horrors of the war years" (217).[13] This statement is fascinatingly misleading. Fuller in fact edited the Falkenau footage onto a larger reel with his other war footage, presumably when he returned to the United States, so he would have seen the film both to edit it and again if he was ever to look at the other footage (which he did). He also revisited the Falkenau footage in detail for the making of a documentary, *Falkenau: The Impossible* (Emil Weiss, 1988), which revolves around his filming of the newly liberated camp.[14] Finally, he consistently revisited "the horrors of the war years" in print, interviews, and film throughout his career.

Fuller's misleading statement speaks to the fraught emotional politics of his filming and then possessing, both in a material and psychological sense, this footage throughout his life. Like Margaret Bourke-White, who photographed camp liberations, Fuller's relationship to the moment of his filming may have created a kind of dissociating effect. As Bourke-White explains it: "Using the camera was almost a relief. It interposed a slight barrier between myself and the horror in front of me . . . The protective veil was so tightly drawn that I hardly knew what I had taken until I saw prints of my photographs."[15] Bourke-White's delayed reaction to what she—or rather as she understands it, her camera—had witnessed, resonates with Fuller's own experience, which left him "numb" (217). In the Weiss documentary, Fuller in fact describes the act of filming these events as an "advantage": "I was kept busy doing all this, what you're seeing, and others just had to watch." The camera, then, mediates the horrific nature of that experience while the moral imperative of a greater duty to document aids in the rationalization of the act of filming.

Fuller's heavily edited Falkenau film is, roughly speaking, divided into three parts—depicting first the preparation of the dead for burial, second the transportation of the bodies to the burial site, and finally the burial itself.[16] The film begins with raised white titling photographed on darker backgrounds and edited onto the film, likely after Fuller returned stateside: "V-E+1

May 9, 1945 / Produced in Falkenau Concentration Camp / Czechoslovakia." With images of a swastika, a gun, and the Big Red One alongside some of the titles, the opening credits attribute the presentation of the film to the 16th Infantry Regiment of the 1st U.S. Infantry Division, supervision to Captain Kimball Richmond, and photography to Fuller.[17]

The first time Fuller captures evidence of the abject fate of those interned in the camp follows a shot of the front of a jeep with its own version of titling painted under the front windshield, a message with both self-congratulatory and, given what follows it, ironic resonances: "Good~Show!" Up until this moment Fuller's camera has been largely stationary, but here the camera pans from the jeep, with a smiling G.I. blurrily visible behind the wheel, to a group of men walking with shovels. Fuller's treatment of these men reflects the significance of who they are: the "leading citizens of Falkenau," who were "handpicked by Richmond because they said they didn't know anything about a camp near the village, right on the outskirts."[18] These are the men putting on the "good show" that follows and Fuller seems cognizant of this performative aspect of the film, explaining in the Weiss documentary that: "The story you are about to see was written by him [Captain Richmond], but really it wrote itself."

Although history has provided the mise-en-scène for what follows, Richmond is clearly orchestrating—one might follow Fuller's lead and say directing—this film, which places on display both the camp's victims and the "leading citizens of Falkenau" who are quite literally made responsible—by Richmond and by the camera—for what follows. As Losson has illustrated, most liberation films were "shot in extreme confusion," from which we may infer that "these images correspond not so much to a conscious and planned operation, but rather to a simple attempt to capture the phenomenon in its opacity."[19] Fuller's film does not reflect this sense of confusion; rather, it presents an unusually orderly narrative, an attempt to ritualize and rationalize the "extreme confusion" typical of the experience of liberating. This marked difference from other liberation footage recalls Vivian Sobchack's taxonomy of the various ways—accidental, helpless, endangered, interventional, ethical, or professional—in which death can be photographically documented.[20] Although the ethical weight of his observational role is shifted by virtue of the fact that Fuller's film is largely a post-mortem, of sorts, his cinematography and editing still inscribe the film with a highly subjective orientation in which his moral stance may be detected. He is, in Sobchack's terms, "the immediate viewer—the filmmaker with camera" who "physically mediates his or her own confrontation with death . . . and charges it with a moral meaning visible to others."[21] The carefulness of his cinematography and editing suggest a desire to bring order to his subject. It also reflects a desire to carefully scrutinize and assign blame to this group of diegetic spectators.

In the film, these "leading citizens of Falkenau"—who reappear throughout the film—walk, stop, and are then pictured grouped together looking off at something the camera does not reveal. The men appear to be silent and are relatively expressionless as they gaze screen left. Abruptly the footage cuts to what are implied reverse shots depicting the subject of the men's gazes: two quick takes—one second and two seconds respectively—of a small room with naked corpses and blankets stacked on top of each other in precisely the manner described by Fuller in *A Third Face*.

Fuller's first presentation of human evidence of Nazi atrocities thus occurs in the form of a kind of blink. The language of the film suggests that these men

Courtesy of Academy Film Archive, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

Divisional credit and the "leading citizens of Falkenau"

stare at what the camera only provides a glimpse of. However, it is worth remembering the degree to which Fuller was mediating the unfolding narrative both at the moment of filming and in "postproduction." The film is not a replica of Fuller's, or even of these men's experience; it is an ordered version of that experience. It is not just recording, but crafted narration. This is even more the case because careful study of the footage and of the geography of the camp reveals that this is truly an impossible reverse shot: these men are looking away from the structure that contains the bodies (it is actually behind them) and therefore Fuller has made an editorial intervention that suggests they are looking at something at that particular moment that they simply could not be seeing.

This is not a matter of deception; Fuller took expressive license in the editing of this sequence to introduce the horrific nature of the film's subject in a fashion that links the sight of the corpses to the men having to face up to their deaths. This is an early assignation of responsibility that sets the moral framework for what will follow, in some ways justifying the act of filming the unfilmable by attributing the gaze to someone other than the cinematographer himself. The hurried nature of the "reverse shots" suggest the degree to which, as Sobchack understands it, "vision must visibly respond to the fact that it has broken a visual taboo and looked at death," here by temporally easing into that sight and by affixing this gaze to those implicitly guilty for its occurrence.[22] Since there is no telling how Fuller conceived of the future life of this film, it is worth wondering if his formal practices here enact a drama of deciding what was "fit to film" both on the spot and in the editing room. Do these first shots of the camp victims formally reflect shock, horror, shame, guilt, or perhaps simply an attempt to treat the dead with dignity? These are speculative notions, but what is certain is that these "blinks" do not set a formal pattern for what is to come; rather they offer an introduction to the real subject of the entire film: the fate of those discarded bodies.

Given the appalling nature of Fuller's subject matter it is interesting that what follows these shots is not any immediate action taken in dealing with the corpses, but rather a relatively long take depicting the observational process. Connected to this first traumatic revelation by a brief shot of two American soldiers, the heroic and moral centers of the operation and of Fuller's film, the camera begins a long pan left—but in terms of motion rather quick, too quick to really discern facial expressions or attire with any accuracy—across another group of men crouched on a slight hillside, overlooking the events transpiring below.[23] In Weiss's documentary, made more than forty years after these events took place, Fuller, while looking at this same footage, identifies these men as "the prisoners watching the show," using the language of performance in a fashion perhaps curious given that the usual "privileged" spectators in liberation films are the German people brought in from the local towns. Elsewhere Fuller claims that it was "German officers loading the bodies of their victims onto wagons, pulling them through the town" and that the townspeople had "to look at what they claimed they didn't know anything about. The camps, the ovens, the dead," suggesting that these townspeople, then, would likely constitute the group of witnesses on the hillside.[24] In *A Third Face*, Fuller states that "POWs, mostly teenage *Hitlerjugend*, helped place the shrouded corpses in a mass grave" (217). Here he distinguishes these POWs from "the townspeople" who also participate in and observe the ritual. Prior to learning of Fuller's identification of the men on the hillside as liberated prisoners in Weiss's documentary, I felt certain that they were local townspeople, which would follow the conventions of other liberation films. SS guards—usually male, but sometimes female—or German civilians were typically forced to handle the bodies following camp liberations and local townspeople were brought in to watch this process or to tour the camps and see the ex-prisoners, both living and dead, for themselves.

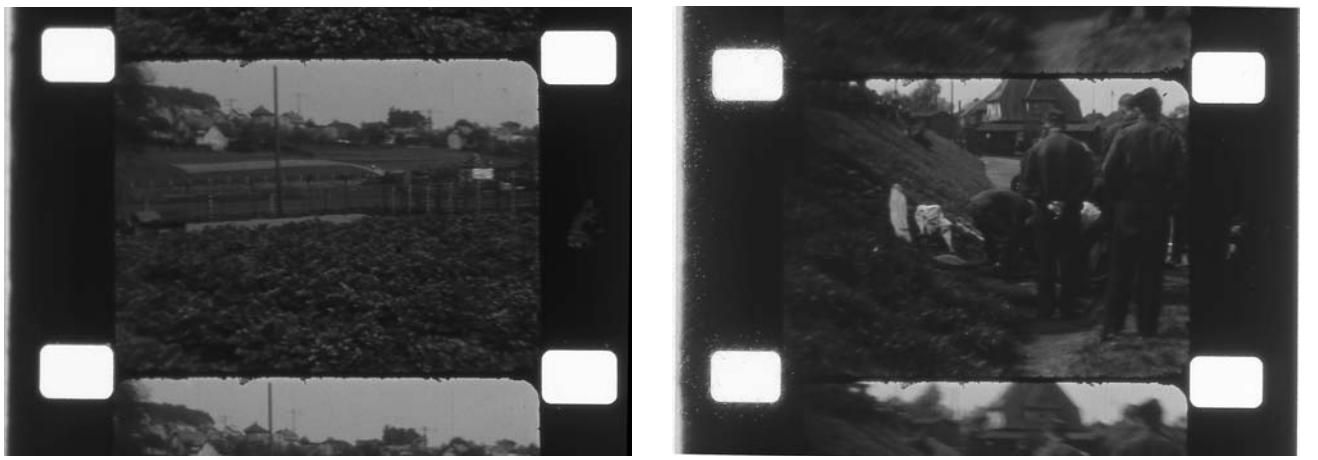
Fuller sometimes contradicts himself in interviews regarding this period, which is not at all surprising. I do not think that Fuller intentionally confuses the events of this day, but both the passage of time and the disturbing nature of these events conspire to complicate the accuracy of memory to produce a version of what Janet Walker terms "disremembering" or awkward remembering.[25] It is certainly possible, even likely, that German prisoners and local townspeople participated in various aspects of this event and that the hillside was predominantly or exclusively populated with prisoners, although they also appear on the "main stage" in various shots. However, the most striking issue that this confusion over the hillside witness and participant identification raises is not who really crouches atop that hill or who is handling the bodies, or even how Fuller remembered or later chose to narrate these events; rather, it is one of spectatorship and interpretation. This ambiguity suggests the complexity of what might otherwise seem like a readily legible cinematic document: if these men are survivors, I would not read their spectatorship in the same way as I would if they are local townspeople or SS prisoners. As Shandler points out, there is a rather rigid, perhaps even simplistic moral framework for interpreting this kind of footage

in which meaning is predetermined by identity—liberators are heroic, victims tragic, perpetrators and bystanders guilty; but this requires attention beyond what I am able to provide here. Cornelia Brink's observation about the naïve assumption that seeing photographs of camp liberations is somehow equivalent to "understanding what they represent" is applicable to the simultaneous legibility and opacity of such an intimate documentation as Fuller's film provides, as it is to any liberating cinematographer's footage.[26]

What we are left with is intent: Richmond's choreography of the scenes that follow and Fuller's representation of them purport to figure the survivors as a counterpoint to the corpses being handled by the local citizenry/German prisoners (it may be a combination of both), who are assigned guilt both as spectators and as recruited (forced?) participants in this ritual. But Fuller's film also makes a statement about the multivalent power of witnessing, both here and elsewhere, suggesting the different ways of seeing the same events: as evidence (from the photographic perspective), as guilt (from the civilian or SS perspective), as moral righteousness (from the liberating perspective), and as something less clear, but perhaps bordering on triumph, however futile or relative (from the surviving prisoners' perspective). These significations are in some ways built into the framework through which we view these supposedly liberating images, but they are equally subject to change based upon our understanding of who is doing what and for what reason.

Carol Zemel understands photographs of similar forced German witnessing in a fashion that is relevant to Fuller's film, which also "constructs positions of witness, perpetrator, and heroic liberator. But the pictures of civilians also enact a double witnessing: the real spectacle is not the dead, but German citizens photographically designated guilty bystanders to Holocaust atrocity."[27] Although I disagree with Zemel's account of what "the real spectacle" is—especially in Fuller's case, because the dead are so clearly central to the visual schema of the film and to the ideological project in which it is participating—her point about the assignation of guilt and the spectacle of witnessing is confirmed by Fuller's insistence on filming the liberated prisoners and the guilty "performers" in a fashion that connects them to the town just outside the gates of the camp as well as to the dead within it. In some ways, too, the spectacle on display is the Allied victory itself, here played out in careful acts of compassion and discipline.

The subsequent shot shows a group of men from the neighboring town (to avoid unnecessarily complicating the remainder of my discussion, I will now follow Fuller's identification, in Weiss's documentary, of participants) getting white undergarments out of a wagon and walking towards the camera. A cut takes us to the focus of their attention: an emaciated man on a stretcher. Fuller initially and repeatedly cuts away from the corpse (we soon realize there is no chance this man is alive) as he is dressed by two men being instructed by an American soldier. But Fuller then reframes the shot, coming closer and closer as he changes positions around the body. This scene is repeated, with another corpse being brought out of the building—Fuller termed it a "putrid hut" (217)—and the camera panning up to witness the hillside observers standing all at once in what was presumably a gesture of respect for the dead, choreographed or not. Fuller is unsparing in what he now films: naked, skeletal, and often visibly diseased bodies being clothed, intercut with shots of the standing observers. The film and its maker signify clearly: this is what I am seeing *and* this is also what they—both the observers and the participants—are seeing.



Courtesy of Academy Film Archive, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

The first image in the panoramic shot that ends (right) with a corpse being dressed

Fuller continues to film the relatively gentle preparation of the bodies, revealing the manifestations—sores, swelling, emaciation, makeshift bandages—of the conditions in which these human beings had been kept. The bodies, now dressed in dark pants and jackets, are laid out on (mostly) white sheets in a row and Fuller pans right to connect this growing row of the deceased to the observers on the hillside, affirming their proximity and status as witnesses to this attempt at dignifying the dead.

These shots also repeatedly reveal the proximity of the neighboring town in the background of the camp, a closeness that Fuller later emphasizes in an uncut panoramic shot of the camp's wire boundary fence with the town in isolation just outside of it. The shot makes a similar point as the one just discussed: here is where the free lived their lives and they were—vehement denials aside—surely aware of what was happening in their backyards.[28] Fuller's pan extends all the way around the camp's borders from the outlying town to an open expanse, to the observers situated on the hillside, all with the camp's wire fence as a continuous point of reference. This nearly 360-degree unedited take eloquently argues against the mass denial of awareness frequently encountered by liberating soldiers and it ends with Fuller walking the camera (in an approximation of a dolly shot) in towards one of the naked corpses. Beginning with the town and ending with a corpse, Fuller's formally sophisticated shot silently but forcefully assigns culpability.

But it also achieves something else: Fuller's panning movement and walking-in reminds us of the cinematographer's guiding hand, his presence as witness and, in some ways, as judge. The climax of this portion of the film repeats this articulation of Fuller's dual role: it is marked by a pan left across the completed row of dressed bodies on white sheets, a cut to a reframed shot of the bodies with the observers visible on the hillside above them, and then a pan back across the length of the bodies. A remarkably composed shot from behind the soldier who has been visibly orchestrating much of the day's events captures the row of corpses through a salute, aligning the camera with a redemptive American gaze. A speech is made and wounded men, presumably former camp inmates, appear in reaction shots. Fuller again takes the opportunity to pan, this time to the left and from another position, from the observers to the bodies, to American soldiers, while also capturing the town behind them, a final reminder from the camp's interior of the complicity necessary for the camps to have existed. This chapter of the story comes to a close as the prepared bodies are carefully carried (by four men at a time) from the sheets to the back of a cart where they are re-stacked for transport to their final resting place.

Liberators were frequently confronted with such an overwhelming number of dead upon arrival at the camps that they were forced to bulldoze bodies into mass graves in an attempt to stave off disease. While the Falkenau ritual is far from that—the number of bodies is certainly incomparable with the numbers found at, say, Buchenwald or Belsen—there is a painful irony to the returning of these bodies to the piled state in which they were originally found, one that Fuller—who evinced a lifelong commitment to revealing the absurdity of war and its rituals—was likely aware of given the camera's articulate framing of this moment. Fuller, in fact, provides one shot of the corpse-filled cart that echoes our original glimpse of the bodies "thrown on top of each other like newspapers." One suspects that despite attempts at dignifying the dead, the point is that the lives lost are ultimately just that. Patriotism and a sense of moral certainty aside, Fuller was not above being realistic about the notion of liberation: "We were liberating them. But there was no way of saving them. Very few would survive. They were only free to die"

Courtesy of Academy Film Archive, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

The camp with, mid-shot, its "putrid hut" and the patriotic image of a saluting soldier

(215). The clothing, the observing, the burial all seek to restore dignity that is ultimately difficult, if not impossible, to confer. No amount of ceremony, the film seems to argue, can repair the irreparable. However, the film also suggests that this unusually careful ritual was a necessary drama for the survivors as well as for the liberators who intended, at minimum, to make motions towards civilized behavior and to force an apology, of sorts, from those who facilitated, either actively or passively, these conditions.

This first fourteen or so minutes of the film are thus dedicated to the preparation of the bodies for burial and they conclude with another shot of the "Good~Show!" jeep leading the procession out of the camp and to the burial site. As an intertitle, the message seems irreverent. But it does speak to the theatrical, ceremonial aspects of what occurs. The next several minutes of the film take us into the town that we have been glimpsing outside of the camp's gates in what Fuller describes in Weiss's documentary as an act of intentional degradation, one that attests to Captain Richmond's desire to ratchet up the staging of this burial by creating a spectacle: the "leading VIP's of Falkenau" having "to pull and push these dead past the townspeople." The cart filled with the bodies is hauled—Richmond apparently "did not want any vehicle to transport the bodies . . . they had to be pulled and pushed by the men who said, No one died in that camp atrociously"—through the town, accompanied by a tank and jeeps.[29]

At this parade—which recalls the processions that were central to the rise of the Third Reich, a kind of upending of the uniformed, mechanical mass spectacles that helped bring Hitler to power—Fuller captures yet another set of witnesses: other townspeople, including women and children, who had not been brought inside the camp's gates to aid in or witness the burial preparation, but who appear on the street to watch the convoy. The procession itself has grown larger, with at least one woman joining the ranks, and the marchers look intently at the camera as they pass it on their way to the gravesite. While the reactions of the town's onlookers are hard to read—many seem not to register much of anything in their expressions—an older male bystander to the right of the frame suddenly removes his hat. In Weiss's documentary Fuller explains that Captain Richmond told the man to take his hat off, presumably in a gesture of respect, again reminding us of the orchestration of the events depicted in Fuller's film. But, in another unusual moment, this time of surprising dissonance, Fuller captures a young German boy who has just shot his toy gun at the American convoy and who appears to be retrieving something (a discharged fake bullet?) from the street. The moment painfully indicates the degree to which those the spectatorial lesson was meant to reach could, even as that lesson made its way down their own streets, not see it in the way it was intended.

Courtesy of Academy Film Archive, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences

The dressed bodies stacked and onlookers at the mass gravesite

The concluding minutes of the Falkenau film depict the final internment of the bodies. Placed carefully in a mass grave, each man's arms are folded, jackets are adjusted, heads shifted. Fuller cuts between the grave and the bystanders, including a panning shot that rather poetically captures the shadows of the observers across one of the grave's walls. A German boy (perhaps in his early teens) is assigned the job of entering the pit to go across the line of bodies to ensure that arms and hands are correctly placed before he and a few others begin to drape white sheets over the top of the bodies. Fuller shoots the length of the grave and shows the camp survivors—several of them with "SU" (Soviet prisoners) printed on the back of their jackets—throwing a handful of dirt on top of the sheet-covered bodies. Then the shoveling of the rocky earth begins and Fuller provides a haunting shot of the sheet-covered bodies with dirt cascading onto them. There is one significant pause in the ritual, taken because one of the sheets has fallen off of the face of one of the bodies. A new sheet is

procured, the head carefully covered, and dirt used to ensure that it will not slip away again. The film ends presumably as the ritual has. Burial is not just equated with closure; it is the end of this story, or at least of this part of the story.

Fuller's Falkenau footage is, as I have already noted, part of a genre of liberation films taken both by professional and amateur cinematographers for use as evidence of war crimes and, at least partly in Fuller's case, as a more personal memento of the war; this may not have been the original motivation for making the film (given Richmond's initiation of it), but it appears to have been the outcome up until the making of Weiss's documentary. Fuller's suppression of his own archived experiences—at least until he somewhat reluctantly unearthed them in an attempt to combat such Holocaust "minimizers," and therefore deniers, as France's Jean-Marie Le Pen by participating in the making of the Weiss documentary—recalls what Griselda Pollock has termed the "eternal present" of trauma,[30] which Fuller seems to have acknowledged by representing the Falkenau film as hidden away, "too painful to watch," never to be taken out again (217, 510–11). The fact that Fuller claimed to "still tremble to remember those images of the living hunkered down with the dead" (214) at Falkenau is striking both because of his desire to express a lingering visceral reaction that acknowledges the unfading power of those images and because what Fuller claims to remember here are *images*, not events and not the living and dead themselves.

This sense of mediation is crucial, reminding us—as Dominick LaCapra does in *History and Memory After Auschwitz*—that "no memory is purely primary . . . there is no fully immediate access to the experience itself even for the original witness."[31] Although Fuller is not the only future filmmaker to have participated in the cinematic documentation of camp liberations, what Fuller depicts in his Falkenau footage and how he orders it is, based on the evidence I have encountered, unique. The meticulous care with which the individual bodies are prepared, clothed, displayed, and situated in the gravesite; the unhurried orchestration of the ritual from start to finish; and the formally meticulous presentation of it are all quite singular. Functioning as a witness, recorder, keeper of painful memories, and survivor in his own right, Fuller struggled with both the possession and the presentatation of this terrible subject matter. His treatment of the Falkenau footage attests to the traumatic burden that came with filming those who could not be saved, reinforcing the extent to which what happened in the camps continues to exceed adequate understanding, explanation, and visualization. Fuller's extraordinary rendering of this event and his fraught relationship with its existence recalls Janet Walker's observation that "the past is never wholly accessible, nor is it ever really over."[32] Fuller's remarkable footage, with its concern for the morality of witnessing and its humane effort to create a redemptive story out of the ruins of European culture, also reminds us that the visual evidence produced in and of Nazi Germany continues to unfurl, that the stories told by such truly moving images continue to surface like bits of repressed memory seeking expression.

NOTES

This article could not have been written without the help of Christa Lang Fuller, who allowed me to work with Sam Fuller's 16mm films at the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Academy Film Archive. I am also grateful to the Archive's director, Michael Pogorzelski and especially to archivist extraordinaire Snowden Becker for her uncommonly generous assistance in working with these materials both during my visit and after. Bruce Levy from the Steven Spielberg Film and Video Archive at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum aided my navigation of that archive's moving-image collection of concentration camp liberations. Devin Orgeron and Frances Guerin expertly commented on drafts of this article. Finally, without the Orphan Film Symposium it is unlikely that I would have learned about AMPAS's Fuller holdings, or that I would have conceived of this area of research.

1. The quote is from Fuller's "An Essay on Film Directing Entitled 'Headlines to Headshots,'" in Tay Garnett, *Directing: Leaning from the Masters* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 1996), 90.
2. Falkenau (variants include "Falkenau an der Eger," "Falknov," and "Falkenow") was one of a hundred subcamps of Flossenbürg concentration camp. In Fuller's autobiography, *A Third Face: My Tale of Writing, Fighting, and Filmmaking* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002), he writes that the camp held "a tragic mix of Jews, Czechs, Poles, Russians, Gypsies, and antifascist Germans" (215–further quotations from this source are referenced parenthetically in the text of this article). In another context, Fuller claimed that Falkenau was "a camp for Russian soldiers, but many Americans were in it. They were mostly dying of TB. Dogtags had been removed, so we couldn't tell which corpses were Americans and which were not." Eric Sherman and Martin Rubin, *The Director's Event* (New York: Antheneum, 1970), 153. In Emil Weiss's documentary, *Falkenau: The Impossible* (1988), Fuller explains things differently: "we didn't know what country these prisoners were from. As far as we're concerned they could represent eight, ten, twelve different countries."
3. This footage along with Fuller's other 16mm films from the war have been loaned by Fuller's widow, Christa Lang Fuller, at the AMPAS Film Archive. According to AMPAS archivist Snowden Becker, the Falkenau footage is approximately 650 feet and is edited—presumably by Fuller himself—onto a longer, approximately 1400-foot reel with other footage Fuller shot during the war.
4. Nicolas Losson, "Notes on the Images of the Camps," *October* 90 (1999): 25–35.

5. See http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/camp/ for more information.
6. Jeffrey Shandler, *While America Watches: Televising the Holocaust* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 12. Photography also played a crucial role in Holocaust documentation. Carol Zemel, "Emblems of Atrocity: Holocaust Liberation Photographs," in Shelley Hornstein and Florence Jacobowitz, *Image and Remembrance: Representation and the Holocaust* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), has documented the ways in which liberation photography established tropes that are quite similar to those of liberation films, including images of "German civilians summoned by Allied generals to view the camps and 'clean up' operations—prisoners or soldiers moving corpses from trains, wagons, pits" (206).
7. The third edition of Annette Insdorf's *Indelible Shadows* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003) provides the most in-depth treatment to date: two paragraphs that discuss the film in the context of Weiss's documentary.
8. Janet Walker, *Trauma Cinema: Documenting Incest and the Holocaust* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), xviii. Walker is discussing a particular kind of contemporary documentary film of the past twenty years, but her engagement with issues of trauma, memory, and history are relevant here.
9. See Robert Abzug's *Inside the Vicious Heart* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985) for more about the generals' visit and the sense of urgency in documenting the atrocities, especially 20–30 and 132–35. Abzug writes that "Eisenhower felt it was essential not only for his troops to see for themselves, but for the world to know about conditions at Ohrdruf and other camps. From Third Army headquarters he cabled London and Washington, urging delegations of officials and newsmen to be eye-witnesses to the camps" (20). All indications suggest that Fuller's footage was never used in any official capacity. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has a number of 8mm and 16mm films in their collection which were shot by amateur cinematographers following other camp liberations, including Mauthausen, Buchenwald, and Dachau.
10. Shandler, *While America Watches*, 6.
11. Ibid., 12.
12. Samuel Fuller, *The Big Red One* (New York: Bantam, 1980), unpaginated prefatory quote. The novel and the film are not strictly autobiographical, although many of the incidents that occur are repeated almost verbatim in *A Third Face* as autobiographical fact.
13. Fuller's explanation here is consistent with Janina Struk's conclusion about the fate of much of the photographic evidence taken by American soldiers, who were encouraged to photograph the atrocities they discovered at the camps but who often "kept their photographs hidden" instead of sharing them upon their return. Janina Struk, *Photographing the Holocaust: Interpretations of the Evidence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 31.
14. As of the writing of this article Emil Weiss's French documentary, which includes excerpts of Fuller's 16mm footage of Falkenau along with Fuller's narration of the film, and in which Fuller, according to Lee Server, *Sam Fuller: Film Is a Battleground* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1994), returns "to the area of the camp" to discuss the footage, is not available in the United States. There appears to be only one print of the film in North America, on deposit at the AMPAS archive, and Snowden Becker has generously provided me with a transcript of Fuller's narration of his Falkenau footage.
15. Margaret Bourke-White, *Portrait of Myself* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), 259.
16. Snowden Becker carefully examined Fuller's original 16mm film and detected around seventy splices, indicating a significantly edited film as opposed to one in which scenes were composed largely in-camera. Two different kinds of splices are evident in the film and it is possible that Fuller edited the film at different points in his life. Fuller shot the Falkenau footage on German-produced Gevaert safety stock but the opening titles are on Kodak film, suggesting that he likely shot the titles at a later date, perhaps after he returned to the United States. There are no date codes on either stock.
17. Note that Captain Richmond's first name is spelled differently here than it is in *A Third Face.*
18. In Weiss, *Falkenau.* Fuller states that there are twelve or fourteen of them, but I count sixteen to eighteen in this shot.
19. Losson, "Notes on the Images," 26.
20. Vivian Sobchack, "Inscribing Ethical Space: Ten Propositions on Death, Representation, and Documentary," *Quarterly Review of Film Studies* 9 (fall 1984): 283-300.
21. Ibid., 292.
22. Ibid., 291.
23. There look to be around fifty men in this shot. Later shots indicate a somewhat larger group, perhaps in the seventy-five to one hundred range.
24. Server, *Sam Fuller*, 22. In the Weiss documentary Fuller identifies the individuals handling the bodies very clearly as citizens of Falkenau: the gray-haired "very important banker" and other "leading VIP's."
25. Walker, *Trauma Cinema*, xxii.
26. Cornelia Brink, "Secular Icons: Looking at Photographs form Nazi Concentration Camps." *History and Memory* 12, no. 1 (spring–summer 2000): 142.
27. Zemel, "Emblems of Atrocity," 206.
28. As Susan Caruthers argues in "Compulsory Viewing: Concentration Camp Film and German Re-education," *Milennium* 30, no. 3 (2001), panning and tracking shots also functioned "to place the provenance of the footage beyond question" (741) in official cinematic records of the camps.
29. In Weiss, *Falkenau.*
30. Griselda Pollock, "Holocaust Tourism: Being There, Looking Back and the Ethics of Spatial Memory," in David Crouch and Nina Lubbren (eds), *Visual Culture and Tourism* (New York: Berg, 2003), 176.
31. Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory After Auschwitz* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 21.
32. Walker, *Trauma Cinema*, 193.

MARSHA ORGERON is Assistant Professor of Film Studies at North Carolina State University.

ABSTRACT This article examines a neglected but important film from Samuel Fuller's formative years: the 16mm footage he shot in 1945, depicting a funeral ritual following his infantry division's liberation of Falkenau concentration camp. The footage provides a fascinating glimpse into the director's past and into World War II history.

KEYWORDS 16mm, concentration camps, war film, amateur film, World War II

BOOKS

REVIEW ESSAYS

American Movie Critics: An Anthology from the Silents Until Now

Edited by Phillip Lopate. New York: Library of America, 2006. $40.00 cloth. 720 pages.

A random dive into Phillip Lopate's *American Movie Critics*—an anthology spanning ninety-one years of film writing—can turn up many individual gems, from Melvin B. Tolson's 1939 "*Gone with the Wind* Is More Dangerous Than *Birth of a Nation*," first published in the African American newspaper *Washington Tribune*, to Gilberto Perez's superb 2004 discussion of John Ford's *Judge Priest* (1934), "Saying 'Ain't' and Playing 'Dixie,'" which appeared in *Raritan* magazine. The sweep of the project takes us through some standard milestones that have yet to lose their interest and allure—Hugo Münsterberg on "The Function of the Photoplay" (1916), Gilbert Seldes's *An Hour with the Movies and the Talkies* (1929), Siegfried Kracauer's *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947), Manny Farber on "Underground Films" (1957) and "White Elephant Art vs. Termite Art" (1962), Molly Haskell's *From Reverence to Rape* (1974), Geoffrey O'Brien's *The Phantom Empire* (1993). Speaking personally—as an Australian who reads quite a lot of American film writing—I discovered a few names hitherto unknown to me (such as Lincoln Kirstein and Walter Kerr) and caught up with some delightful pieces that had slipped my grasp, such as Stuart Klawans's witty demolition from *The Nation* of *Gladiator* (2002).

But let's get down to brass tacks. Every cinephile who is as fond of reading about films as seeing them will pick up this large book and instantly do a few quick calculations—probably before reading even a single word of the pieces included or Lopate's presentation of them. They will note certain proportions and disproportions. Fourteen texts from Otis Ferguson, seven from Andrew Sarris, and six from James Agee, versus one apiece from Susan Sontag and Jonathan Rosenbaum? Forty pages of Pauline Kael versus twenty-seven from J. Hoberman? Still more testily, they will draw up a mental list of who, in their fierce opinion, is missing from—and who should never have been included in—such an "official" collection.

Here, up front, is my own calculation. The roll call of the Grievously Missing—sticking mainly to names of the past thirty years—includes Amy Taubin, Chris Fujiwara, Kathleen Murphy, David Ehrenstein, Greg Ford, Bérénice Reynaud, Dave Kehr, Fred Camper, Ronnie Scheib, Gary Indiana, Howard Hampton, Yvette Bíró, among many others (some of whom I name below). Why not have only one text each from everybody and thus include more writers? Dubious or risible inclusions: Armond White (restricted here to two "early" pieces pro and con Spike Lee, but already full of the unargued bluster that has become his trademark in *New York Press*); Roger Ebert (represented by a weak piece on Lubitsch's *Trouble in Paradise* [1932] that muses only on the characters and the actors who play them, almost as if he were reviewing a piece of theatre); bell hooks (whose feisty but maddening diatribe on *Pulp Fiction* [1994] merely asserts that the film is "cynically cool" about twenty times in four pages); John Ashbery (the guy may be a great poet, but his take on *The Seventh Victim* [1943] is strictly amateur film criticism).

Of course, my personal reaction is much like anybody's personal reaction, in that it reflects a specific set of likes and dislikes—and thus can be taken or left accordingly. However, as one starts getting into *American Movie Critics*, other, more general thoughts are likely to arise, less focused on individual writers (and readers' tastes or distastes in relation to them). Lopate strangely excludes all filmmakers with the sole exception of Paul Schrader, even those who are winningly funny or eloquent in prose, like John Waters (easily the equal of Paul Rudnick, aka Libby Gelman-Waxner, who does make it in), Richard Linklater, or Jean-Pierre Gorin. He has made an evident, admirable attempt to include women and African Americans, but does not do the politically right thing for gays (of course, there are gays in the book, but only fleeting acknowledgment given to queer film criticism, beyond its origin in Parker Tyler). He includes—with a note of dutifulness—the sociological commentaries of Kracauer and Barbara Deming written in the 1940s and 50s, but doesn't draw upon the "Kracauer revival" that is making itself powerfully felt in books like Edward Dimendberg's *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* (2004) . . . which is maybe a little too "academic" for *American Movie Critics* (more on this below).

Of course, every anthology—even one of more than 700 pages—has to be selective and will end up omitting much worthy stuff. Lopate laments the fact that he had to leave himself out and he is candid about

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the criteria underlying his "curatorship" of the pieces—he has judged them primarily on the quality of their writing and, he adds, it helps if he agreed with their judgments. And he has certainly done a good job of diversifying the types of films discussed by his chosen critics—from arthouse classics to Hollywood blockbusters and disreputable genre films—as well as setting up some engaging "correspondences" between pieces, such as answering Rudolf Arnheim's 1935 "The Film Critic of Tomorrow" with J. Hoberman's 1998 "The Film Critic of Tomorrow, Today."

But the question nags: what is a book like this *for*, exactly? To rehearse a somewhat dusty Canon of Critical Greats that, for the most part, can be found cemented in the previous anthologies on this topic? To ever-so-slightly update that canon? Surely such a book, if it is be really worth something, has to be the occasion for a full-blooded *argument* about the role and value, the forms and histories, of film criticism. A safety valve seems to have been clamped on this Library of America project from the outset: under the alibi of pitching itself to what Lopate calls the "lay reader"—and there is nothing wrong with that, since every young or not-so-young cinephile has to start somewhere, with something basic—it takes few risks and does not set out to redraw the map of what is already said and known about American film criticism. (Alas, even such treading of safe roads has not saved the book from a disgracefully reactionary "film criticism is a load of silly rot" rant by Clive James in the *New York Times Book Review*.)

Lopate, a "man of letters" as well as a film critic, turns out to be just the person the Library needed for this task of conserving the status quo. The logic of his selection and the bias of his presentation are signaled in the very first paragraph of his introduction: critical writing is worthy of our attention and praise if it "honors the best belletristic traditions of our nonfiction prose." *Belletristic* is a strange word to encounter in this context. Lopate may not be aware that it has sometimes been a term of abuse in the polemical wars of the past four decades surrounding film criticism and theory. But his emphasis is perfectly clear: he values criticism as *literature*, above anything else that it might be, or aspire to be (like political reportage, cultural commentary, or aesthetic history); and the type of literature he values has an unmistakeably highbrow aura (even when it is talking about such lowbrow things as genre movies or even porn)—the kind of aura bestowed by the nation's literary Establishment.

Lopate's selection gives a large place—inordinately large, in my opinion—to esteemed fiction writers or poets (Vachel Lindsay, Carl Sandburg, Ralph Ellison, James Baldwin) who have dabbled in film criticism, while giving short shrift to those commentators who enter the field through the door of either pop-music commentary (Greil Marcus) or art criticism (Dave Hickey). This may have something to do with Lopate's somewhat peculiar assertion that "it is arguable, in fact, that in the last fifty years more energy, passion, and analytical juice have gone into film criticism than literary criticism, or probably any other writing about the arts." Arguable, indeed. One sign of Lopate's excessively literary orientation when compiling this volume is his evident fondness for books—and also the various *Review of Books* journals, whether from London or New York—as markers of published respectability, and indeed as the most dependable signposts of what is historically significant in the film-critical field.

It is a rigged game: between the lines of Lopate's brush-off, we can intuit that, for him as for many others these days, criticism is sensitive, human, complex, and literary, while theory is over-cerebral, programmatic, and badly written.

But can the history of movie criticism really be compressed onto a shelf or two of a bookcase containing the classics from Lindsay's *The Art of the Moving Picture* (1915) to Stanley Cavell's *Pursuits of Happiness* (1981) and James Harvey's *Movie Love in the Fifties* (2001), not forgetting Andrew Sarris's *The American Cinema* (1968) and David Thomson's *A Biographical Dictionary of the Cinema* (1975)?

To be fair, Lopate certainly does not limit himself to representative excerpts from classics of this ilk. When he is not eulogizing books, he tends to wax appreciative about meeting deadlines, extolling the professionalism and spunk of those who were or are able to turn in workable (even belletristic) prose on a punishing weekly schedule. (Curious point of national comparison: André Bazin and Serge Daney wrote to deadlines too, but no French commentator makes a big deal of it.) And so the balance of the selection here tends to be devoted to dependable (and sometimes underwhelming) "troupers" like Vincent Canby, David Denby,

Kenneth Turan, and Richard Schickel—although not, strangely enough, Todd McCarthy or Robert Koehler from *Variety*, a publication which appears to fall in the outbin that Lopate labels "trade journals."

But what is missing between the weighty, eternal book and the ephemeral newspaper release is precisely the realm of the *magazine* or journal. And any sensible history of film criticism, it seems to me, has to be a history of magazines, rather than only the most remarkable individuals who contributed to them.

The culture of film magazines seems to hold little weight for Lopate in his reckoning of the field and its history. He duly mentions some of their titles—*Film Culture*, *Film Comment*, *Cinemascope*—and includes many selections that originally appeared in magazine format (although preference has been given to those pieces already monumentalized in some previous book collections)—but he offers no sense of what these various magazines stood for and why, and how they frequently defined themselves in opposition to each other. A great many significant magazines simply disappear from Lopate's account, be they primarily devoted to cinema (*American Film*, *Movietone News*, *The Thousand Eyes*) or other art forms strongly linked to it (*Artforum*, *Interview*, *The Believer*, *Rolling Stone*, plus many "small" literary magazines down the decades). Nor does Lopate allow into his purview non-American magazines containing American writers, such as (pre-eminently) *Sight and Sound* in Britain. Some illustrious U.S. contributors to that magazine (like Rosenbaum and Hoberman), of course, enter Lopate's radar from elsewhere —but not, for example, California-based Bill Krohn, whose highly original and searching essays have appeared in *Cahiers du cinéma* (under the banner of "American correspondent") for the past quarter-century, or Florida-based Jean-Pierre Coursodon, regular contributor to *Positif* and co-author of the massive *50 ans de cinéma américain* (1995).

A highly questionable modus operandi here is Lopate's exclusion of something he offhandedly and mysteriously calls "film theory"—which, in his essay collection *Totally Tenderly Tragically* (1998), he has confessed to reading but rarely retaining in his memory. Such amnesia begs for a psychoanalysis! He rejects "film criticism . . . as a conduit for film theory" because "the lay reader's pleasure is rarely where it [i.e. theoretically informed writing] places its emphasis" and refers to "the academic article, with its abstruse jargon." This seems to be a coded way of declaring that no primarily scholarly, university-based journal has been allowed to enter the selection pool. Now, I can accept Lopate's setting aside of purely academic writing and his desire to appease the "lay reader." But in the large world of specialist journals that includes *Camera Obscura*, *Cinema Journal*, *Screen*, *Framework*, and so many others to which American writers contribute, couldn't Lopate have dug to find some engaging, innovative, and indeed belletristic texts? Certain prime candidates spring to mind instantly: James Naremore, Tom Gunning, Janet Bergstrom, David Bordwell, P. Adams Sitney, and many others. After all, film theory had, for better and for worse, its own belletristic moment in the era of Roland Barthes's greatest influence.

In decades past, commentators worked themselves into a lather over the spurious distinction between film reviewing (which provides a quick consumer guide) and film criticism (which offers an in-depth view)—spurious, because (as Manohla Dargis's entries here well show) even the most constrained review space can (and should) aspire to critical insight. Today, this appears to have been displaced by the newer opposition between film criticism and theory. But it is a rigged game: between the lines of Lopate's brush-off, we can intuit that, for him as for many others these days, criticism is sensitive, human, complex, and literary, while theory is over-cerebral, programmatic, and badly written. But Lopate could do with a good dose of theory to lift him beyond dreadfully old-fashioned talk of "visual analysis"—a belles-lettres term if there ever was one—which forms a refrain in his sections of the book. Never mind mise-en-scène, *découpage*, suture, off-screen space, and all the rest, how about an acknowledgment of *sound*?

Undoubtedly the weirdest aspect of *American Movie Critics* is that it behaves as if the Internet has not yet been invented. Naturally, it is the Internet, more than anything else, which has changed the landscape of the film-critical culture worldwide, tipping the balance even more towards magazines (in their many, newfangled cyberforms, including blogs) rather than books. Yet when Lopate surveys, synoptically, the changes that have affected the practice of film criticism, he stops at "the greater emphasis on graphic design over copy" in hard-copy publications! He never mentions the Internet—not even when one of his selected authors, seventy-seven-year-old Donald Phelps, today writes exclusively for that medium. And although writers such as Kehr and Fujiwara are employed by U.S. newspapers, their high international profile and readership are largely due to their online writing. As for any new talents who are coming up through the Internet, you won't find them here.

The occulting of the Internet and its significance points to another odd aspect of this book and its editorial tone: Lopate's inability to place American film criticism in any meaningful international context. It would be pointless indeed to argue that a book called *American Movie Critics* published by The Library of America is rather fixed on America. But there is still something troubling about this cavalier lack of context. To some extent, this is business as usual: American cultural manifestations frequently display—with a casualness that is truly maddening to non-Americans—the assumption that either the United States are a whole wide world unto themselves or that the actual whole wide world is breathlessly in touch with everything produced there. Where no book about film criticism in Brazil, Greece, or Australia would fail to measure itself against the twin cinephile towers of America and France, Lopate's volume of Americana—despite its occasional vague gestures to the "international film press" or a particular writer's "international reputation"—has no clear vision of what constitutes global film culture today.

Indeed, Lopate's own belletristic prose begins to go to hell whenever he tries to imagine the coordinates of that globe: his regret that he could not include "such wonderful English critics as Graham Greene, Raymond Durgnat and Anthony Lane" slips sheerly from the U.K. dateline into a lame justification of not being able to devote "a set of gargantuan tomes" to "all the glorious film criticism written worldwide" (he's going to need more than three token Englishmen for that task). Far more egregiously—in a passage that nervously tries to come to terms with the *kind* of world cinema, largely non-mainstream in nature, that so many progressive critics are today militating to support—Lopate evokes those who are "trolling the backwaters of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the avant-garde for a new pantheon." *Backwaters*? It seems that an awful lot of the non-American world is backwater to Lopate.

The book reflects a generally mainstream, middle-of-the-road view of cinema. Those international backwaters that some of his finest contributors troll—including, say, the films of Tsai Ming-liang, Abbas Kiarostami, and Jia Zhang-ke—don't get much of a look-in, beyond the acceptably arthouse Wong Kar-wai (in a piece by Kent Jones); and the avant-garde (another mighty large backwater!) makes a cameo appearance due only to the inclusion of Jonas Mekas. This project is more comfortable with a nostalgic regard at the French and German New Waves of simpler days.

This mainstreaming effect—which comes down, finally, to a passive acceptance of the kind of film culture that is served up by the commercial interests of the industry, as commentators like Rosenbaum never cease reminding us—chimes along with Lopate's distaste for polemics. Snippets of such internecine warfare are certainly included in the book—from Sarris exposing the power base of "Bos" Crowther to Farber slighting the "Mekas propaganda wheel"—but Lopate gives this thread a wishy-washy gloss when he veritably sighs about the "fraternal dissing" he often found in the archives of film criticism: "I am struck by how many times a film critic has felt the need to launch an assessment of a movie by ridiculing or denouncing the opinions of some colleague." He concludes that such a "combative strategy is but one of the many tried-and-true ways to insert tension into a film review." It is hard to imagine a less political account of film criticism than this—cultural wars reduced to the trivia of personal rivalries and the swagger of action-packed writing.

ADRIAN MARTIN is Senior Research Fellow in Film and TV Studies, Monash University, Australia. He is co-editor of the Internet film journal *Rouge* (www.rouge.com.au) and the author of forthcoming books on Brian De Palma and Terrence Malick.

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Film Analysis: A Norton Reader

Edited by Jeffrey Geiger and R.L. Rutsky. New York: W.W. Norton, 2005. $37.30 paper. 960 pages.

There is an appealing ambiguity in the term "reader." It usually indicates a person, sometimes a machine, and sometimes neither. A reader may be, and often is, an anthology, or, as *Webster's* says, "a book for instruction and practice especially in reading." But then of course readers in the first sense scarcely read readers in the last sense. We dip into them, raid them, make extracts, assign or are assigned sections of them. That is what they are for. I have just read, slowly and with great pleasure, straight through and in sequence, the Norton reader on film analysis, and this is a report on the experience. Is such a reading a mistake or a betrayal? Or could we learn lessons we might otherwise miss?

The first thing to say is that the book doesn't lose out on the experience, as many anthologies do. It does what it needs to, and several other things as well. Here are forty-four separate essays on forty-four separate films, designed to "address *film analysis* as a practice" (15). The work is "not a textbook in the conventional sense," the editors say (13). It seeks to "give practical expression to the broader descriptions of formal, historical, and theoretical issues raised in . . . textbooks" (ibid.). All of the essays are interesting in their own right and many of them are outstanding pieces of critical work, lucid, surprising, informative. It's invidious to pick out names, but it's probably worse to be evasive, so I would point you in particular to Paul Coates on *The Cabinet of Dr Caligari*, Richard Maltby on *It Happened One Night*, James Naremore on *Citizen Kane*, Dana Polan on *Casablanca*, Marcia Landy on *Rome Open City*, David Desser on *Tokyo Story*, Kris Ravetto-Biagioli on *8½*, Robert Kolker on *2001*, Shohini Chaudhuri on *Ali: Fear Eats the Soul*, Cynthia Fuchs on *Taxi Driver*, Philip Rosen on *Ceddo*, Jenny Kwok Wah Lau on *Peking Opera Blues*, and Shuqin Cui on *Raise the Red Lantern.* The selection of films is heavily tilted toward the United States (nineteen films, compared with five from France, three each from Germany, Italy and Japan, two from Spain, and one each from China, Cuba, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Mali, Russia, Senegal, and Sweden). The tilt makes sense given the classroom purposes of the book, and its representation of the rest of the world certainly shows an awareness that things are happening elsewhere. I think the tilt could have been less severe, and there are obviously many works and emphases missing from the work. Where is the marvelous Carl Theodor Dreyer, for example? Is *Stagecoach* really our best instance of a Western, or is this a bit of cinema piety? Similarly, if *Bicycle Thieves,* as Geoffrey Nowell-Smith says, "has sunk from being regarded as a pinnacle of film art to becoming one of those films shown only as monuments to changes in critical fashion" (424)—think of its role in Altman's *The Player*—why is it taking space that could have been given to *L'avventura* or *Rocco and his Brothers*? But these are questions rather than complaints. I ask them because they mark certain contours of the book, even a certain conservatism perhaps, not because I think the editors have to please everybody.

The essays do stand alone and the editors' hope that "the chronological structure of the book should allow for interesting comparisons" (15) turns out to be just a hope. The book is not going to do this kind of work for us and there are moments when a little more dialogue among the essays would have helped. If the definition of screwball first offered to us is right, for example, the later definition must wrong. Unless, of course, an "erratic pitch" (285) could strike out six opponents in one game (219). A more comic instance of failed conversation occurs when Ingrid Bergman appears to be having an affair with someone called Frank (as distinct from Robert) Capa (478). By the time we get to the index things have been cleared up—but wrongly. The man in question is now Frank Capra. There is another irresistible and very attractive error in the book—at least I think it's an error. The Cold War in America "led . . . to a wholesale purging of intellectuals, teachers, dentists, screenwriters, and film directors" (605). I'm afraid those "dentists" are just a mistranscription for "artists," but perhaps there is a whole aspect of the history of the American Left that we have been missing.

But if the book doesn't propose comparisons to us, it doesn't get in the way of any speculations we may want to make, and one advantage of taking it in whole is the impression it gives of where we are in film studies. Everyone writing in the book works at a university, there is scarcely any mention of non-academic critics, and although these writers are too intelligent to be anti-theory they are, with only one or two exceptions, resolutely non-theoretical. The names of Adorno, Benjamin, and Deleuze flicker faintly now and then. Lacan comes up three times, but all in the same essay. Karl Marx appears once (and so do the Marx Brothers). Noël Burch shows up only as someone who oversimplified Japan. André Bazin, David Bordwell, and Laura Mulvey do rather better, but eleven, eight, and six mentions respectively, in 889 pages of text, are still pretty skimpy.

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Conversely, history is always there, and it is sometimes all there is. Each essay is divided into two sections—context and analysis—and the format is not as rigid as it might seem, since almost every individual contributor manages to make something different of it. But occasionally "analysis" is just a continuation of "context," as if the material history of a film—local and national politics, budget, production background, box-office returns, prizes—told us all we need to know; and it's striking that in a book so packed with brilliant formal readings, no one seems able to enjoy form without apologizing for it, or putting it to work for some more serious master, some unimpeachable puritan principle like Meaning. "His technique is not merely technical," Paul Julian Smith says of Almodóvar (883), and the phrase could be the book's motto.

Meaning is the big thing—so much so that the editors drop the word four times into one short paragraph (19)—and nothing matters until we have set out to find it. Ideology, another favorite word in this book, lurks along the way, but risks and dangers in interpretation, even flirtations with racism and other forms of prejudice, provide valuable encounters because they confirm our diligence. One can admire this emphasis, as I do, having lived with many of its mindless (and worse) alternatives, and still worry about the word "merely" in "merely technical," and hope that teachers using this book will have plenty to say about pleasure. The editors are worried about this because they think (correctly) that many students are hostile to the very idea of analyzing works supposed to be sheer entertainment, "requiring little explanation or thought" (17). Such students are committed to enjoying nothing but their enjoyment, and in this light all analysis becomes over-analysis. But the essays in this book are not going to convert, or even help, these reluctant interpreters. We can solemnly teach them to accept our ideas of "real meaning or social value" (ibid.), that is, tell them that all entertainment is secretly something else. But we can reach them, provoke them intellectually, only through their pleasure, and pleasure itself can be scrutinized. "Interpreting or analyzing films," Christopher Faulkner writes in his essay on *The Rules of the Game*, "is a form of social practice, not just an aesthetic exercise" (301). True enough, but that "just" is like Smith's "merely." Wouldn't an aesthetic exercise also be a social practice? Roland Barthes once suggested that paying attention even to one's stupid preferences could become a discipline, a "science of the subject."

One of the strong features of the anthology is, as its editors claim, the "diversity" (38) of the critical practices on offer, and I would say especially the diversity of forms of precision. Just what did the Lumière Brothers bring to the history of the cinema? Not "pictures in motion," Karen Littau says, but "film viewing as a collective experience" (43). And what exactly is a movie, as we now think of it? "A continuous fictional story," Tom Gunning suggests, "performed by actors and extending over space and time" (65). In spite of his famous insistence on montage of contrasting shots, Bill Nichols tells us, Eisenstein also had a "penchant for montage within the frame" (165). Richard Maltby makes an excellent distinction between "generic cinema" and "a cinema of discrete genres" and thinks Hollywood represents the former (224). *Citizen Kane*, in spite of appearances, is not like *Rashomon*. "It's a film about complexity," James Naremore notes, "not about relativity" (348). We all know that Kubrick, at the opening of *2001*, cuts from a flying bone to a spaceship. But do we remember the bone is falling when the cut takes place? Robert Kolker does (611). And how often do we choose to think that crosscutting does more than put different times or spaces together? In *To Sleep with Anger*, Valerie Smith says, the technique "highlights the contradictory and yet inexplicable pulls of sacred and secular experience so central to migrant experience" (823). Technique is not merely technical; but it is as technique that it performs its acts of magic and memory.

The great theme of the book is not the quest for meaning or the avoidance of essentialism, nor is it the lurking anxiety about the frivolity of the aesthetic. It is what we might think of as an unsettled theory, the question of what is real in a film.

The book is careful about diversity in another sense and repeatedly takes a stand against various essentialisms. Why would Japan or India or China have to keep representing "the East"? Wouldn't we do better to think, as Joanne Bernardi suggests, that Japanese films might "know a thing or two about being cosmopolitan" (263)? And to remember, as Neepa Majumdar nicely puts it, that "while Western viewers might be tempted to read any Indian films as representative of all India, urban Indian viewers (and filmmakers such as Satyajit

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Ray) might be similarly inclined to view any filmic India village as representative of all of rural India" (513). The parenthesis is a little hard on Ray, who probably knew one village from another, but the point is a good one. And what happens when directors like Zhang Yimou create pictures of China that include Western fables about the East? "Self-orientalization" is a term Shuqin Cui uses (839); but the process may be even more complex than that. Or more "problematic," as Cui herself says (840).

But the great theme of the book, it seems to me when I try to see it all together, is not the quest for meaning or the avoidance of essentialism, nor is it the lurking anxiety about the frivolity of the aesthetic. It is what we might think of as an unsettled theory, the question of what is real in a film, what is ordinary, what "escape" means, and what work our fantasies are doing in the cinema. Is this a single question? Could it be? I'm going to suggest that it is, and that a more comprehensive idea of what reading is could emerge if we pursue it. In this light, films that stay close to the world as it is and films that show us the world as it isn't are not as far apart as they may otherwise seem.

Let me assemble a few pieces or faces of the question, almost all taken from the reader. That train at La Ciotat, for example, and the first audience's reaction to it. Karen Littau quotes authorities saying there would have been a showman present, in addition to a pianist, and he might say reassuring things like "it is a real train, but it cannot come off the wall" (55). I hope he did. This is quite different from saying "it is not a real train" or "this is only a movie." Of course if it was a real train it wouldn't be on the wall in the first place, but the claim has a curious displaced truth to it. I think of Grigori Kozintsev's remark about the world of his great film *King Lear* being "absolutely real (filmed on location), without existing in nature." "Real" here means "really photographed." The digital age has made such propositions seem quaint, but we can't understand the old (and continuing) lure of the cinema without tackling them.

Worries about fakery in film, about the authenticity of Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* or Buñuel's *Las Hurdes*, for instance, are intimately linked to the prior notion that film must capture more of reality than any other medium. You can't cheat if you can't at least be suspected of honesty. If Flaherty "invented a place and a people," as Jeffrey Geiger suggests (135), he would have worked the exact counterpart of Kozintsev's trick, converting nature into fantasy rather than building an unnatural reality. The opposition is too neat for its parts not to be related to each other, or even interchangeable. Once we see this, Godard's comparison of Flaherty to Hitchcock, cited here by Geiger (133), looks as if it might run both ways. Flaherty has plenty of suspense and Hitchcock, like the Lumière Brothers, deals in solid realities, even if they are only on the wall. That is a real shower in *Psycho*, but we can't get killed in it.

There is an inescapable mythology here, a reality that is not real, and Italian neo-realism was an exploration of it, not a naive submission to it. Cesare Zavattini, quoted at different points in the anthology, offers a version of the train and the wall argument, but related to narrative. "Life is not what is invented in 'stories': life is another matter" (403). We note that his quotation marks enclose "stories" rather than "life." His idea was "not to invent a story which was like reality, but to tell reality as if it was a story" (435). The dream is to get reality on to the screen without art; yet only art will give the effect of reality, on the screen or anywhere else. Reality itself doesn't always give the effect of reality, but let's not get into that. Like the cinema itself from its earliest days, neo-realism doesn't want to copy reality, it wants to steal or displace it, give it a new home. The dream is alive and well in the work of Kiarostami and Almodóvar, as the respective essays in the anthology make clear. The critics' term now is "the everyday" rather than "life," but the quest for neglected or unseen reality, for what is hidden or forgotten, remains the same. Kiarostami seeks, Hamid Naficy says, "the moments of rupture, tension, and glory hidden in the quotidian" (806); and Paul Julian Smith reminds us that Almodóvar's camera, usually so active, at times "comes to rest on the characters, paying its respects to an everyday life that will be shattered by mourning and melancholia" (884–85). In Zavattini's terms, Kiarostami finds the story in reality and Almodóvar catches the reality between the stories.

But what about all the films that will have none of this, that frankly go for fantasy, for the happy ending and the flight from conflict, that offer only what Tomás

Gutiérrez Alea calls "a ludicrous parenthesis in the middle of everyday reality" (682)? There is some very good writing on this subject in *Film Analysis*, suggesting that the parenthesis still belongs to reality's sentence. We could start with Sharon Willis's argument that the ideas of resemblance and imitation offer us only "an impoverished theory of fantasy's relationship to agency in the world" (777). As if fantasy had only old-fashioned realism to go on. As if fantasies themselves were not real enough, even in their historical results. We could go from there to Dana Polan's perception that the central flashback in *Casablanca* is "an all-consuming utopian flight that holds history at bay" (375), and linger a little on the use of the word "utopian" in these contexts. Paraphrasing Richard Dyer, Richard Maltby says "Hollywood's version of entertainment allows its audiences' more intense, more emotional, less inhibited, less restrained selves to escape into a revised, utopian version of their everyday world" (223). And if it seems a long way from these easily fleeing souls to the harshness of black African history, listen to Philip Rosen on the counterfactual elements in Sembene's *Ceddo*: "the image can give us a variation on African history that did not happen, a historical option lost" (732). Such film gestures, Rosen says, are "critical and utopian at the same time" (734).

There is too much here to unpack at one go. Escape is not imprisonment and a passion for reality is not the same as a longing to get away from it. But escape does entail a notion of imprisonment and every flight from the real, however successful, brings plenty of real baggage along. We might want to say there are critical and uncritical utopias, even that there are mindless ones. But I am inclined to say that just as stupid preferences can usefully be explored, so every utopia, if studied long enough, will yield a criticism of the actual world. In this perspective, holding history at bay would not be that different from trying to remember what history forgot.

MICHAEL WOOD is Professor of English and Comparative Literature at Princeton University. He is the author of *Literature and the Taste of Knowledge* (Cambridge University Press, 2005); his "At the Movies" column appears in the *London Review of Books*.

British Film

By Jim Leach. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. $70.00 cloth; $24.99 paper. 289 pages.

The day may arrive when a discussion of British cinema might proceed without first rebutting the often-quoted scorn of François Truffaut who claimed that there was a "certain incompatibility between the terms 'Britain' and 'cinema.'" Such a discussion might also refrain both from introducing British film as standing suspended between European artiness and American commerciality, and from questioning whether there is such a thing as a "national cinema" at all. That day is not at hand. Jim Leach's *British Film*, part of the National Film Traditions series, begins by making all of these gestures, but develops nonetheless into a worthy addition to the rapidly expanding literature on this once overlooked and much-maligned national cinema.

British Film is a general introduction to some of the major trends, figures, and themes in British cinema since the coming of sound. Its synthesis of the work of most of the important critics and historians of the past twenty years presents the reader with a broad range of thought on the subject, with frequently neglected works such as the *Carry On* series, the Hammer Studios horror films, and the Gainsborough melodramas discussed side by side with more established topics (Carol Reed, David Lean, Ealing comedies). If the conclusions reached are rarely remarkable, Leach's methodology is solid and his arguments are for the most part well illustrated by his cinematic examples.

In fact, one of the most provocative aspects of the book is its organizational structure, which rather than breaking down by chronology or personality is instead divided according to central thematic concern, cultural issue, or stylistic approach. The chapters vary widely in topic from British Expressionism, Ideology and the School Movie, and Realism, to British actors and the British sense of humor, but the structure within each is very consistent. There is some variation in the opening two chapters, the first of which discusses *The Captive Heart* (Basil Dearden, 1946) and *Chariots of Fire* (Hugh Hudson, 1981) to argue persuasively for a cinematic "national character capable of including all classes and regions," and the second that uses John Grierson, Alexander Korda, and Alfred Hitchcock to illustrate the perhaps reductive idea that there were three dominant strains of filmmaking in Britain in the 1930s: Grierson's realist documentary, Korda's historical spectacle, and Hitchcock's genre film.

After these two chapters Leach settles into a regular pattern. Two or three films and filmmakers from three time periods are contrasted and compared to illuminate dominant historical concerns and cultural developments. For example the section on British Expressionism begins by comparing two highly stylized films from 1944, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger's *A Canterbury Tale* and Gainsborough's *The Madonna of the Seven Moons* (directed by Arthur Crabtree), in order to show how their blend of realism and formalism call into question then-dominant ideas of British national identity. The discussion moves on to the late 1960s and early 70s with the formally experimental work of Ken Russell, Nicolas Roeg, and John Boorman compared to that of D.H. Lawrence in the way that it challenged established standards of morality. The chapter concludes by setting Peter Greenaway's *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (1989) against Derek Jarman's *Jubilee* (1977) to demonstrate the continuing influence of the avant-garde on films critical of British culture.

A serious question arises though as to whom exactly this book is pitched. If it is designed to introduce the student or reader to the subject of British cinema, then there are simply too many significant omissions. The most glaring of these is the amazingly inventive and vital period between 1896 and 1905 when the so-called Brighton School lead the cinematic world by inventing the first panning head shots and the first point-of-view shots, as well as pioneering early experiments in special effects, narrative construction, and *découpage*. While Leach explains the exclusion of early British cinema in his introduction, its absence still leaves a major gap in the picture presented to the uninitiated.

Further hindering a comprehensive description is the fact that there is virtually nothing on the British silent period and no mention of the two extremely important Beatles films, *A Hard Day's Night* (Richard Lester, 1964) and *Help!* (Lester, 1965), which more than any other British export fueled the international demand for the Mod cinema that for a brief period turned London into the epicenter of world film style. While Leach does discuss the prominent Mod films, *Darling* (John Schlesinger, 1965) and *Alfie* (Lewis Gilbert, 1966), it is only to illuminate the changing sexual mores of the 1960s. In terms of more contemporary filmmakers, *British Film* completely ignores the work of Michael Winterbottom, Terence Davies, Danny Boyle, Mike Figgis, Julien Temple, and Michael Radford. *British Film*, despite its many merits, does not serve as a viable introduction to the field.

If, on the other hand, the intended reader is someone who has already encountered *Rescued by Rover* (Lewin Fitzhamon, 1905), and Davies's *Distant Voices, Still Lives* (1989), then the book simply does not offer enough that is new. Most of Leach's critical discussion is drawn from other well-known sources, including the wide-ranging work of Charles Barr (*Ealing Studios* [1977]), John Hill (*British Cinema in the 1980s* [1999]), and Andrew Higson (*Waving the Flag: Constructing a National Cinema in Britain* [1995]). While Leach does not rely too heavily on any single work or author and his survey of the critical literature is fairly comprehensive, there is only a modicum of original analysis to link together the book's fusion of other writers' ideas.

The organizational structure, though intriguing, allows little space for in-depth analysis of any single film or figure. Even when Leach does discuss a single film in some detail, it is often from a filmmaker like Powell, Lean, or Hitchcock

whose work spanned decades, yet there is no sense given of a larger career context. So we get one-and-a-half pages on *A Canterbury Tale* and a bit about *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), but no mention at all of the more essential Powell and Pressburger films, *Black Narcissus* (1947) and *The Red Shoes* (1948). In addition, the book rarely engages the films on either the formal or industrial levels, ignoring specific cinematic articulations and the workings of the British motion-picture business in favor of a more general, literary style analysis of plot, character, and theme. As it seems aimed at neither specialist nor initiate, *British Film* stands as a sound work without a readily apparent audience.

EVAN LIEBERMAN teaches in the Film Studies department at Emory University. He is currently working with David Cook on a book entitled *The Moving Image* for Oxford University Press.

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East–West Encounters: Franco-Asian Cinema and Literature

By Sylvie Blum-Reid. London: Wallflower Press, 2003. $70.00 cloth; $20.00 paper. 148 pages.

Sylvie Blum-Reid's book makes a valuable contribution to the important emerging field of Franco-Asian cinema and literature studies. In light of the potential ambiguity of the hyphenated terrain of her subtitle (and even vaster title), Blum-Reid does well to define her parameters at the outset, as "France on the Western side and mostly Vietnam and Cambodia on the Eastern, with a few extraterritorial incursions" (2). Although Vietnam and Cambodia do not come close to equaling "Asia," Blum-Reid's reduction of the continent to the countries constituting the former Indochina (along with Laos) is logical in light of colonial history and lends her work coherence. Her focus on Vietnam makes her topic more manageable, as does her emphasis on films and literary works from the 1990s, a historical moment which she identifies as the beginning of France's renewed interest in its forgotten (or repressed) colony. Blum-Reid also enriches her work by engaging in the abovementioned "extraterritorial incursions" through repeated references to Wong Kar-wai and mention of Yasujiro Ozu as well as through brief analyses of films about francophone Africa such as Claire Denis's *Chocolat* (1988) and Brigitte Rouan's *Outre-Mer* (1990). In so doing, she touches upon areas for further research, either implicitly, as in the case of Franco-Chinese and Franco-Japanese film, or explicitly, as when she invokes Vietnamese filmmaker Trin T. Minh-ha's work on the connections between Franco-Asian film and Francophone African film.

East–West Encounters constitutes a much-needed addition to the underrepresented scholarship on Franco-Asian literature, including Jack Yeager's books on Vietnamese literature in French and, closer to her work, Panivong Norindr's *Phantasmatic Indochina* (1996). Indeed, Blum-Reid might have foregrounded Norindr's book bit more in her own study, for example when she refers to a "mental Vietnam" (83), a concept quite similar to Norindr's eponymous (and more eloquent) one. Both Norindr's and Blum-Reid's books examine Vietnam/Indochina, but Norindr's emphasis is colonial while Blum-Reid's is postcolonial.

Blum-Reid posits that France and Europe more generally have learned from the East and can continue to do so (6), an argument that seems self-evident today, in the wake of Roland Barthes's *The Empire of Signs* (1970) and Edward Said's groundbreaking work, *Orientalism* (1978). Still, Blum-Reid does well supporting the claim through close analysis of films and literary texts. Her examination "crisscrosses different fields and does not follow a singular path" (8), although her literary studies, primarily in the concluding chapter's analyses of works by Linda Lê and Kim Lefèvre, are overshadowed by her attention to film.

At the core of *East–West Encounters* is the important concept of hybridity, or the "in-betweenness" of Franco-Asian directors and writers from Lam Lê to Lefèvre, as epitomized by what Blum-Reid calls their "cultural métissage" (134). This concept extends beyond racial hybridity, but she discusses it with respect to Eurasians such as Lefèvre in her autobiographical *Métisse Blanche* (1989) and vis-à-vis the characters of Eliane (played by Catherine Deneuve) and her daughter Camille in *Indochine* (1992). Blum-Reid suggests compellingly in chapter 7 that "film-makers placed in a diasporic situation perform a balancing act between their community and country of adoption" (130). This balancing act results from the "foreignness" experienced by exiled filmmakers when expressing themselves in either their native or second language and when in either birth or adopted nation, the latter resulting in a sense of homelessness or nomadism. A film such as Tran Anh Hung's *Scent of Green Papaya* (1993) has been criticized both for being "too French" on the one hand, or (more aptly, according to Blum-Reid) Japanese, on the other hand (70, 75). Given that conflicting accusations of being "too Eastern" and "too Western" have cursed directors such as Akira Kurosawa, who was "purely Japanese," one might ask whether it is only métis directors who suffer from this problem, or whether it is a more general "East/West" problem. In any case, it is an interesting and difficult issue that Blum-Reid addresses, along with the question which she asks via Carrie Tarr and with reference to Tran and Panh of whether diasporic Asian filmmakers have a responsibility to address the issue of Empire in their films (71).

Some of the strongest and most memorable moments in *East–West Encounters* lie in Blum-Reid's use of historical, cultural, linguistic, and even socio-economic material, resulting from extensive research, to inform her readings of films. For instance, she discusses the Chinese painter Tchang Tchong Jen's influence on Hergé, the Belgian creator of the cartoon Tintin, who in turn influenced Lam Lê. In her study of *The Scent of Green Papaya,* Blum-Reid points out nicely that the title conjures up Baudelaireian or Proustian synesthia and, even more importantly, she translates the name of the female protagonist Mui as "scent" for the reader not versed in Vietnamese (63). Prefacing her analysis of Tran's 1995 film *Cyclo*,

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East–West Encounters constitutes a much-needed addition to the underrepresented scholarship on Franco-Asian literature, including Jack Yeager's books on Vietnamese literature in French and, closer to her work, Panivong Norindr's *Phantasmatic Indochina* (1996). Indeed, Blum-Reid might have foregrounded Norindr's book bit more in her own study, for example when she refers to a "mental Vietnam" (83), a concept quite similar to Norindr's eponymous (and more eloquent) one. Both Norindr's and Blum-Reid's books examine Vietnam/Indochina, but Norindr's emphasis is colonial while Blum-Reid's is postcolonial.

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At the core of *East–West Encounters* is the important concept of hybridity, or the "in-betweenness" of Franco-Asian directors and writers from Lam Lê to Lefèvre, as epitomized by what Blum-Reid calls their "cultural métissage" (134). This concept extends beyond racial hybridity, but she discusses it with respect to Eurasians such as Lefèvre in her autobiographical *Métisse Blanche* (1989) and vis-à-vis the characters of Eliane (played by Catherine Deneuve) and her daughter Camille in *Indochine* (1992). Blum-Reid suggests compellingly in chapter 7 that "film-makers placed in a diasporic situation perform a balancing act between their community and country of adoption" (130). This balancing act results from the "foreignness" experienced by exiled filmmakers when expressing themselves in either their native or second language and when in either birth or adopted nation, the latter resulting in a sense of homelessness or nomadism. A film such as Tran Anh Hung's *Scent of Green Papaya* (1993) has been criticized both for being "too French" on the one hand, or (more aptly, according to Blum-Reid) Japanese, on the other hand (70, 75). Given that conflicting accusations of being "too Eastern" and "too Western" have cursed directors such as Akira Kurosawa, who was "purely Japanese," one might ask whether it is only métis directors who suffer from this problem, or whether it is a more general "East/West" problem. In any case, it is an interesting and difficult issue that Blum-Reid addresses, along with the question which she asks via Carrie Tarr and with reference to Tran and Panh of whether diasporic Asian filmmakers have a responsibility to address the issue of Empire in their films (71).

Some of the strongest and most memorable moments in *East–West Encounters* lie in Blum-Reid's use of historical, cultural, linguistic, and even socio-economic material, resulting from extensive research, to inform her readings of films. For instance, she discusses the Chinese painter Tchang Tchong Jen's influence on Hergé, the Belgian creator of the cartoon Tintin, who in turn influenced Lam Lê. In her study of *The Scent of Green Papaya,* Blum-Reid points out nicely that the title conjures up Baudelaireian or Proustian synesthia and, even more importantly, she translates the name of the female protagonist Mui as "scent" for the reader not versed in Vietnamese (63). Prefacing her analysis of Tran's 1995 film *Cyclo*,

Blum-Reid explains the term "cyclo" linguistically as referring to both the vehicle and the person, as well as culturally, as omnipresent in urban Vietnam (76–77). In addition, linguistic explanation of the beur (verlan) term "tronci," derived from "citron," the French for lemon, to refer to the Asian counterparts of beurs illuminates the discussion of Lam Lê's (critical) response to his mentor Tran's *Scent of Green Papaya* (171). Blum-Reid does well to underscore Tran's minimalist dialogue and his character Khuyen's "economy of language." Taking this analysis a step further, she draws an apt and interesting parallel with Tran's "economy of shots" (60, 68). I would add that such minimalism resonates with Taiwanese Second Wave Director Tsai Ming-liang's sparse language and long takes. Blum-Reid also does well with another, more literal sort of "economy," considering markets and funding as crucial factors in the production of Vietnamese films.

Although the strengths of this book far outweigh its weaknesses, the latter nevertheless deserve mention. In some cases, Blum-Reid uses sources or offers information which add nothing, or detract from, her work. Is it really necessary to invoke Propp to come up with the commonsensical idea that "transformation in tales is essential," as the author does when she uses a "Proppian grid" to structure her reading of Lam Lê's *Dust of Empire* (1983), which is less interesting than her own textual interpretations? Does Blum-Reid need to inform us that she "extracted" her "reading and interpretive strategy" (of what kind?) of *Cyclo* "after multiple screenings" (76)? Do we not assume repeated viewings of anyone publishing on film? Similarly, it seems excessive to define such a basic film term such as "to storyboard," which she offers by way of explaining Lam Lê's role on Eric Heuman's *Port Djema* (1997).

Such minor glitches, like the awkwardness of the writing, might have been avoided with the help of (better?) copyediting, which such an important work deserved. Some of the vocabulary and syntax is more French than English; while errors in prepositions, punctuation, and word choice should have been corrected before the book went to press in order to facilitate the smoother read the book deserves. The interview with Panh in the appendix to chapter 6 is a nice addition to the book, the images are good if not remarkable, and the index is a bit sparse, featuring proper names and little else. Despite these areas of weakness, Blum-Reid's book packs in an enormous amount of important material and will be of considerable value for film, French, Southeast Asian, and East–West studies.

MICHELLE E. BLOOM is Associate Professor of French and Comparative Literature at the University of California, Riverside and the author of *Waxworks: A Cultural Obsession* (University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

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Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima

By Abé Mark Nornes. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003. $59.95 cloth; $19.95 paper. 258 pages.

Abé Mark Nornes's *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era through Hiroshima* is, at the outset, an archeology of materials before 1950, or, in other words, before the post-war institutions and discourses of a modern Japan were founded on a radical break with militarist imperialism. Access to written records and documentation surrounding documentary film, previously unread and untranslated, have been crucial here to reconstruct the critical and discursive contexts through which documentaries were produced and understood. Accordingly, the text accomplishes what anthropology would call a salvage ethnography, rescuing from oblivion a field of films that despite being modern have vanished from recognition, both in world cinema and in Japan itself. This is a Herculean project parallel to Noël Burch's *To the Distant Observer* (1979), to recover and rediscover a major segment of Japanese cinema that has not only been forgotten, but radically discarded as if unimportant or obsolete.

Yet Nornes's work is remarkable in other ways as well, since it represents an intervention from outside the conventional boundaries of the academy. Nornes began as a film programmer for the Yamagata International Documentary Film Festival in Japan before becoming a scholar at the University of Michigan. His project began in 1991 with a comparative retrospective of wartime propaganda films called "Nichi-Bei Eigasen" (Japan/America film wars), in order to negotiate intensities of abjection and foreclosure preliminary to any other analysis of this material.

For a long time, based primarily on Donald Richie and Joseph L. Anderson's evaluation in *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry* (1959), documentaries in Japan were considered to be insignificant. Such dismissal was not unfounded, as Nornes acknowledges, since the majority of publicly available documentary films were uninteresting. Further, Japan did not enter modernity with the Renaissance assumption that visual illusionism could be understood as a guarantee of truth, so there seemed to be no popular belief in camera realism on which to base a documentary movement. Not only did documentary seemingly lack any epistemological truth, it also shifted foundational principles repeatedly, so that Nornes's historicization necessarily provides "a material glimpse of the massive changes occurring through decades of social transformation and total war" (xxi).

Initially, non-fiction film was introduced to Japan by foreigners producing actualities. Around 1930, Prokino initiated its proletarian film movement with worldwide repercussions, triggering parallel movements in the U.S. and Europe. Subsequently, the nationalist and militarist movement that took over Japan suppressed Prokino's intervention, traces of which remain in such surviving fiction films as Ozu's *Tokyo Chorus* (1931), and mobilized a propaganda film industry to promote imperialist expansion and the war effort. After the end

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of the war, democratization propaganda then required yet another set of foundational assumptions.

Each of these movements is as incompatible with the others as they are with later documentary principles, leading not only to their neglect but to breaks within the idea of what constitutes documentary in the first place. Any attempt to imagine such disparate models of production in the same context risks a retreat to a unity founded on nationalism, but Nornes is alert to the complexities and contradictions of such reductive simplification. Unlike Europe, where Grierson theorized a documentary mode of representation that derived from Flaherty and Vertov and encountered propaganda as a challenge, documentary in Japan evolved through a series of repudiations and occlusions, never to establish a history, at least until now.

Yet another reason why Japanese documentary film has remained invisible to the world is that the most important films were often censored or suppressed, while film criticism and theory were restricted within the boundaries of a highly regulated public discourse. Like Burch before him, Nornes has nonetheless been able to locate heterogeneity and resistance in what had previously seemed the monolithic period of 1931–45. Iwasaki Akira as theorist and Kamei Fumio as filmmaker exemplify the repressed and forgotten possibilities of documentary in Japan, and Nornes recognizes and restores their roles in film history. At the same time, he argues a theory of hidden discourses, extended from James C. Scott, to infer what remains absent from public representation. Complex processes of heterogeneity and dissidence are precisely what fascist policies seek to suppress and Nornes restores to history much of what has been missing by carefully reading through lacunae and nuance.

Nornes argues that "fascist" has become a problematic term to describe the 1931–45 period, since it suggests both too easy a parallel with Germany and Italy, on the one hand, and too monolithic a society, on the other. He does not hesitate to insist on the brutality and monstrosity of the militarist regime, but discusses competing factions within the military, such as the conflict between Araki Sadao's Imperial Way faction of the Army and the very different policies favored by the Navy, as seen in the films *Japan in Time of Crisis* and *Lifeline of the Sea* (both 1933), in the context of a modernizing and multidimensional Japanese society.

Key to understanding Nornes's method is an understanding of *tenko*, as notably theorized by Tsurumi Shunsuke. *Tenko* is the method of coerced ideological public consent that the militarists successfully used to control and suppress dissidence. Execution or even extended imprisonment were relatively rare and were primarily used to motivate conversion. More common was a forced display of public agreement with national policy and repudiation of past deviance. As a result, in Japan, most leftists survived and continued to participate in public discourse, but only through the loss of any overt independence. This is very different from Germany's policy of exterminating the Left through concentration camps, and led to very different effects in public representations during the war. Filmmakers and theorists remained relatively free to represent doubts and problems through nuance and indirection, as long as they did not overtly challenge the government or its most insistent myths. Kamei's *Fighting Soldiers* (1939), for example, seems more concerned with personal hardship than one would expect in an obligatory nationalist policy film. Nornes's project is to read *tenko* against the grain in order to account for the survival of resistance through covert and indirect strategies. He argues "the conception of *tenko* as 'conversion' or 'apostas' . . . blinds us to important continuities and factors outside repressive state force" (125).

Nornes's book not only makes a valuable contribution to the study of international documentary film, but also to understanding the ambiguous work of such fiction filmmakers as Mizoguchi, Ozu, and Kurosawa during the war, which appears officially patriotic yet contains contradictions that simultaneously question or undermine authority. *Japanese Documentary Film* is of major importance for Japanese and documentary studies, but its significance is not limited to specialists. The issues raised here are important for all of film and cultural studies.

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Roberto Rossellini's *Rome Open City*

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The field of Film Studies has shelved *Rome Open City* in the comfortable place of film history, where it is gathering dust. But while these essays allude to this problem, they replicate the conditions that create it: a mode of formal analysis that never really moves beyond the film itself and its cultural–historical context. For a film that has been modeled and emulated in countless revolutionary film movements, it is a particularly glaring oversight. In her essay, for example, Millicent Marcus brings the film up in relation to Italian political struggles in 1996, but only to demonstrate how the film itself resists a poststructuralist status as text and functions as "the stable object at the bottom" (77). Such a revisionist look at the status and function of film is instructive and interesting, but only serves to add new twists to our understanding—replicating at the same time, however, the very conditions that engender stasis in historical discourse. This is the case throughout the book, which looks to raise several theoretical as well as critical and historical questions about the film. Chief among these is the whole issue of a reexamination, which Gottlieb and several essays give at least passing attention to. *Rome Open City* in particular evidences how interpretation will always be incomplete. The essays here assert that it is impossible to sum up *Rome Open City* and the more one tries to do so, the more one will fail.

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As several of the essays here point out, however, stylistic complexity, collaborative authorship, and temporal proximity between the fictional narrative and historical events all contribute to a pervasive indexicality to the film: a "something" beyond that the film, however indirectly, points to, but which analysis can never seem to put its finger on.

As with many other theoretical problematics, this book provocatively raises such issues, but then leaves them suspended for the sake of critically examining the film. Unfortunately for the essays in this book, such questions are central to their undertaking and not addressing them leads to covering ground already covered. This is most glaringly the case with the argument that that *Rome Open City* does not constitute the radical break with Fascist film that it was once thought to—indeed, that there are several points of continuity between the two. This historical revisionism, however, was fairly well accepted by the late 1980s. James Hay's *Popular Film Culture in Fascist Italy* and Marcia Landy's *Fascism And Film* effectively laid the groundwork for such debunking in 1987 and 1986 respectively. Since Landy is a contributor to this book, it is a strange oversight indeed (both books show up in citations, but not in discussions). The book is rich in historical detail and insightful analysis. One should make no mistake about it, the scholarship here is thorough and engaging, as is the case with Peter Bondanella's essay on the making of *Rome Open City.* Here too, however, it is easy to get lost in the film and never get around to the issues engendered. In the making of *Rome Open City*, for example, the amount of contingencies, obstacles, setbacks, and collaborations is so staggering, it becomes the story—if not history—itself. There is not a sense that the history of this overtly political film also moves forward, intervening in and speaking to political situations beyond Italy. *Rome Open City* holds a place in film history not just for its style, but, like *Strike* or *Battleship Potemkin* (both 1925), for its synthesis of style with politics. All the essays in this book point to the politics surrounding *Rome Open City*, and even gesture to the politics of *Rome Open City*, but fail to situate *Rome Open City* and its critical examination, beyond that context. The volume was pulled together one month after the United States invaded Afghanistan and the timing shows. The essays were written in a more innocent era—when scholarship did not have such a pressing cultural mandate to make historical critique relate to contemporary social conflicts.

In summarizing David Forgacs's contribution to his volume, for example, Gottlieb argues that "Rossellini's 'cinema of thought' unfolds most fully when we are alert to the many layers of signification embedded in the visual design of *Open City*" (26). This summary accurately characterizes an analysis dedicated to exploring the intricacies of signification in a polyvocal, stylistically complex text. Unfortunately, however, Forgacs's analysis goes no further: there are no broader connections, no object lessons, no insights into contemporary hegemonic struggles that the film might possibly address. Forgacs very ably demonstrates with his analysis of spatial relations that "The 'open city' was in fact a divided city" (27), but the analysis ends there. The same criticism can be leveled at Marcia Landy's essay, which attempts to demonstrate that *Open City* frequently shatters "cliché by means of cliché" (88). Backed up by the theories of Delueze, this analysis has great potential to serve as an object lesson for contesting hegemonic meanings, but instead stays bound to the parameters of the film, serving more as a restorative discourse to the film's status within film history. Landy ably demonstrates that far from just recycling melodramatic forms and clichés, *Rome Open City* contests them. There is no attempt, though, to discuss the success or failure of contestation strategies and their impact on current cinema.

For students and fans of *Rome Open City*, the book is an excellent introduction to a critical examination of the film. In addition, the book contains reviews from the film's release and a filmography for Rossellini—all great source material. For film scholars, however, the book is endemic of a strange irony of the field. For all its explosive and multifaceted impact, Italian neo-realism never really garners the attention of contemporary high-power theorists, especially compared to, say, Weimar cinema, which produced little that could stand in comparison to even lesser known neo-realist films like *Outcry* (Aldo Vergano, 1946). Deleuze would be a notable exception, but here too, neo-realism is subordinated to a theory of cinema more than it is explored as a multidimensional sociopolitical phenomenon. In the end, this book does not offer the kind of paradigm-breaking or cutting-edge theory that could reverse that trend. *Rome Open City* not only promotes the promise and potential of social transformation, but also tries to participate in it through cinema. If for no other reason, it deserves a more cutting-edge approach.

VINCENT F. ROCCHIO is Assistant Professor of Communications and Media Studies at Northeastern University.

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Stars and Masculinities in Spanish Cinema: From Banderas to Bardem

By Chris Perriam. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. $74.00 cloth. 240 pages.

In this ambitious and thought-provoking examination of the careers of ten prominent Spanish male actors of the 1980s and 1990s, Chris Perriam poses a highly original alternative to the conventional reading of contemporary Spanish film history, building his argument around the revaluation of the ideological weight of its star system and, as his title indicates, the reconstruction of masculinities. Historically framed against the backdrop of two decades of rapid modernization in Spanish society, as reflected in the evolution of the country's film industry, *Stars and Masculinities* explores the ways recent Spanish star discourse condenses and recirculates a series of culturally specific ideological scenarios that define contemporary Spain.

Perriam focuses principally on the careers of Imanol Arias, Antonio Banderas, Carmelo Gómez, Javier Bardem, Jordi Mollà, and Jorge Sanz. The on-screen performances of these stars also mirror the euphoria and disillusionment with

As several of the essays here point out, however, stylistic complexity, collaborative authorship, and temporal proximity between the fictional narrative and historical events all contribute to a pervasive indexicality to the film: a "something" beyond that the film, however indirectly, points to, but which analysis can never seem to put its finger on.

As with many other theoretical problematics, this book provocatively raises such issues, but then leaves them suspended for the sake of critically examining the film. Unfortunately for the essays in this book, such questions are central to their undertaking and not addressing them leads to covering ground already covered. This is most glaringly the case with the argument that that *Rome Open City* does not constitute the radical break with Fascist film that it was once thought to—indeed, that there are several points of continuity between the two. This historical revisionism, however, was fairly well accepted by the late 1980s. James Hay's *Popular Film Culture in Fascist Italy* and Marcia Landy's *Fascism And Film* effectively laid the groundwork for such debunking in 1987 and 1986 respectively. Since Landy is a contributor to this book, it is a strange oversight indeed (both books show up in citations, but not in discussions). The book is rich in historical detail and insightful analysis. One should make no mistake about it, the scholarship here is thorough and engaging, as is the case with Peter Bondanella's essay on the making of *Rome Open City.* Here too, however, it is easy to get lost in the film and never get around to the issues engendered. In the making of *Rome Open City*, for example, the amount of contingencies, obstacles, setbacks, and collaborations is so staggering, it becomes the story—if not history—itself. There is not a sense that the history of this overtly political film also moves forward, intervening in and speaking to political situations beyond Italy. *Rome Open City* holds a place in film history not just for its style, but, like *Strike* or *Battleship Potemkin* (both 1925), for its synthesis of style with politics. All the essays in this book point to the politics surrounding *Rome Open City*, and even gesture to the politics of *Rome Open City*, but fail to situate *Rome Open City* and its critical examination, beyond that context. The volume was pulled together one month after the United States invaded Afghanistan and the timing shows. The essays were written in a more innocent era—when scholarship did not have such a pressing cultural mandate to make historical critique relate to contemporary social conflicts.

In summarizing David Forgacs's contribution to his volume, for example, Gottlieb argues that "Rossellini's 'cinema of thought' unfolds most fully when we are alert to the many layers of signification embedded in the visual design of *Open City*" (26). This summary accurately characterizes an analysis dedicated to exploring the intricacies of signification in a polyvocal, stylistically complex text. Unfortunately, however, Forgacs's analysis goes no further: there are no broader connections, no object lessons, no insights into contemporary hegemonic struggles that the film might possibly address. Forgacs very ably demonstrates with his analysis of spatial relations that "The 'open city' was in fact a divided city" (27), but the analysis ends there. The same criticism can be leveled at Marcia Landy's essay, which attempts to demonstrate that *Open City* frequently shatters "cliché by means of cliché" (88). Backed up by the theories of Delueze, this analysis has great potential to serve as an object lesson for contesting hegemonic meanings, but instead stays bound to the parameters of the film, serving more as a restorative discourse to the film's status within film history. Landy ably demonstrates that far from just recycling melodramatic forms and clichés, *Rome Open City* contests them. There is no attempt, though, to discuss the success or failure of contestation strategies and their impact on current cinema.

For students and fans of *Rome Open City*, the book is an excellent introduction to a critical examination of the film. In addition, the book contains reviews from the film's release and a filmography for Rossellini—all great source material. For film scholars, however, the book is endemic of a strange irony of the field. For all its explosive and multifaceted impact, Italian neo-realism never really garners the attention of contemporary high-power theorists, especially compared to, say, Weimar cinema, which produced little that could stand in comparison to even lesser known neo-realist films like *Outcry* (Aldo Vergano, 1946). Deleuze would be a notable exception, but here too, neo-realism is subordinated to a theory of cinema more than it is explored as a multidimensional sociopolitical phenomenon. In the end, this book does not offer the kind of paradigm-breaking or cutting-edge theory that could reverse that trend. *Rome Open City* not only promotes the promise and potential of social transformation, but also tries to participate in it through cinema. If for no other reason, it deserves a more cutting-edge approach.

VINCENT F. ROCCHIO is Assistant Professor of Communications and Media Studies at Northeastern University.

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Stars and Masculinities in Spanish Cinema: From Banderas to Bardem

By Chris Perriam. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. $74.00 cloth. 240 pages.

In this ambitious and thought-provoking examination of the careers of ten prominent Spanish male actors of the 1980s and 1990s, Chris Perriam poses a highly original alternative to the conventional reading of contemporary Spanish film history, building his argument around the revaluation of the ideological weight of its star system and, as his title indicates, the reconstruction of masculinities. Historically framed against the backdrop of two decades of rapid modernization in Spanish society, as reflected in the evolution of the country's film industry, *Stars and Masculinities* explores the ways recent Spanish star discourse condenses and recirculates a series of culturally specific ideological scenarios that define contemporary Spain.

Perriam focuses principally on the careers of Imanol Arias, Antonio Banderas, Carmelo Gómez, Javier Bardem, Jordi Mollà, and Jorge Sanz. The on-screen performances of these stars also mirror the euphoria and disillusionment with

post-Franco freedom and the emergence of a new range of conceptions of masculine identity that are inflected by an evolving conception of the national community. Rounding out this historical gallery, the book's final chapter details the career of four younger actors—Eduardo Noriega, Fele Martínez, Liberto Rabal, and Juan Diego Botto—whose screen personae dramatize more recent trends in Spanish culture and society. Of these actors perhaps the two best known to American film audiences are Eduardo Noriega and Fele Martínez, who co-starred in Alejandro Amenábar's first two films: *Thesis* (1996) and *Open Your Eyes* (1997). Martínez went on to start in Julio Medem's *Lovers of the Arctic Circle* (1998) and, more recently, Pedro Almodóvar's *Bad Education* (2004).

Two interrelated premises inform Perriam's discussion. The first is that the Spanish star system that emerged following the end of the Franco dictatorship expresses a range of culturally specific scenarios of male identity and social beliefs. The second is that these masculinities, understood in the plural, are codified in the male body and produce legible patterns of cultural iconography. Neither premise is particularly startling; Perriam's approach echoes the writings of Ginette Vincendeau and Bruce Babington on the star system of other European film industries as well as the more general "body theories" elaborated by Richard Dyer and Judith Butler. Weaving these into a sustained critical focus, however, Perriam tracks contemporary film practices against the backdrop of social and political change, arguing, quite ingeniously, that "Spanish stars . . . embed themselves in the imaginary and real construct that is Spain, and the world's view of Spain" (10).

The crux of his thesis is a simple one. He writes: "These stars are engaged in a dynamic organization of masculine behaviors, ideologies, and performances that is caught up in the interplay of gender, class, and race. Their different roles and body-images construct complex and slippery points of engagement and tension between the fans, the viewer, and the star in the process of identification and projection of different formations of masculinity" (12). The plurality of masculinities to which the book's title refers ranges from old-fashioned cinematic physicality, emotional fragility, and sex appeal to expressions of atavistic male rivalries, all of which lead to the persistent tension between what are ultimately paradigms of straight and gay conceptions of masculinity. What adds special force to the volume is Perriam's highly nuanced readings of these paradigms into detailed analyses of some thirty scenes from key Spanish films of the last two decades, further buttressed by an insightful discussion of the Spanish press's treatment of the stars and their roles.

The volume's subtitle is more than a mere tease. The "Spanish" careers of these two best-known actors crystallize Perriam's historical focus: Banderas's screen career preceding his heralded crossover to Hollywood neatly coincides with the decade of the 1980s; Bardem's effectively covers the 1990s. Bardem, whose picture, tellingly, is chosen for the volume's cover, is perhaps the most exemplary embodiment of the polysemic nature of masculinity common among so many of the actors under discussion. As Perriam acknowledges, from the beginning of his rise to prominence in Bigas Luna's *Jamón Jamón* (1992), Bardem was often featured as the parody of the very notion of manhood he superficially appeared to embody. The oscillation of his screen roles from the prototypical Iberian macho in Bigas Luna's films to the sensitive, gay characters in later films in fact make him an ideal figure through whom to argue the book's larger thesis that, collectively, the careers of these actors reflect "the crises at the intersection of gender power, desire and social process" (14–15).

That argument is less persuasive in the instance of Banderas, whose Spanish career is much more limited than Bardem's in that it is framed most conspicuously though not exclusively through the actor's work with one filmmaker, Pedro Almodóvar, and skewed around a narrower range of masculine roles. Perriam acknowledges the importance of Almodóvar in the formation of Banderas's celebrity status yet leaves largely unexplored the more general problem of distinguishing between the conceptions of masculinity identified with particular Spanish stars and the film auteurs like Almodóvar, Vicente Aranda, Bigas Luna, and Fernando Trueba, who authored the scripts that construct these masculinities. In Banderas's case, the argument is further complicated, as Perriam rightly notes, by an evident complicity between the actor and the publicity machine that constructed his popular identity.

While Banderas and Bardem are perhaps the most appropriate examples of Spanish stardom, their resounding critical and commercial success outside Spain suggests that the culturally specific masculinities that these actors embody have some appeal for transnational audiences. This is an avenue largely ignored by Perriam, who limits himself to the national cultural specificity of his treatment of masculinity and stardom without fully acknowledging either the international dimension of stardom or the particular international appeal of Hispanic or Latin actors.

The other actors, who are less well known outside of Spain, Imanol Arias, Carmelo Gómez, Jorge Sanz, and Jordi Mollà, provide what may be a more substantive and less problematic basis for Perriam's conception of stardom and Spanish cinema. Arias and Sanz are actors with prodigious national filmographies who, over time, have come to represent personalities who transcend particular narrative scenarios and the quirks of specific filmmakers. In his richly detailed discussion of the extensive careers of these two men, Perriam presents one of his most persuasive arguments about the force of the Spanish star system: that the localness of national stars gives a form of address to the national cinematic subject that Hollywood stars cannot rival. It is here, in fact, where Perriam's discussion goes beyond mere typologies of masculinity as he argues for "the layered collective sense of identity . . . the rehearsal of beliefs, in performance and circulation" (204) that the narrative image of these actors provides as embodiment of an evolving contemporary Spanish cultural imaginary.

MARVIN D'LUGO teaches Spanish and Latin American cinemas at Clark University. He is the author of *Pedro Almodóvar* (University of Illinois Press, 2006).

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Icons of Grief: Val Lewton's Home Front Pictures

By Alexander Nemerov. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. $60.00 cloth; $24.95 paper. 213 pages.

There have been numerous books on producer Val Lewton's work for RKO in the 1940s, concentrating for the most part on his horror films, directed by Jacques Tourneur, Mark Robson, and Robert Wise. Unlike other authors who have considered Lewton's dark, nihilistic works, Nemerov approaches Lewton not as a film scholar, but rather an art historian (Nemerov is a professor in the Art Department at Yale University). The result is a remarkable book that completely reimagines Lewton's world and relates it to the numerous classical sources in art and mythology that informed its existence.

Born in Russia in 1904 as Vladimir Leventon, Lewton was brought to the United States by his mother in 1909 and as a young man supported himself with newspaper and magazine work, as well as writing mildly pornographic novels under the pseudonym of Carlos Keith. In 1933, David O. Selznick hired Lewton as a story editor and general supervisor and Lewton cut his teeth working on various projects for the producer, including Victor Fleming's *Gone With the Wind* (1939). In 1942, RKO hired Lewton to set up a "B" horror unit to make pictures on tight schedules for budgets in the $100,000 range. Lewton quickly assumed complete artistic control. He was given a pre-sold film title, a budget, and shooting schedule by RKO's top brass, but otherwise left alone. So long as he kept within these constraints, there was almost no interference from the front office.

Lewton was a producer of wartime entertainments for a mass audience, who nevertheless managed to purvey a bleak personal vision: he offered a world of perpetual unease, in which horror comes not from without (as in Universal's vampire and werewolf films), but from within. In doing so, Nemerov convincingly argues that Lewton brought his audiences into a closer engagement with the worldwide conflict. Although he never directed, Lewton's stamp is evident on every film he produced and he personally selected and advanced the careers of Tourneur, Wise, and Robson. In such films as Wise's *The Body Snatcher* (1945), Wise and Gunther von Fritsch's *The Curse of the Cat People* (1944), Robson's *The Seventh Victim* (1943), Tourneur's *The Leopard Man* (1943), Robson's *The Ghost Ship* (1943), and Tourneur's *Cat People* (1942), Lewton created a series of horror films firmly set in the present, and in America, not in some distant Transylvanian locale. Along the way, he also managed to adapt one of Guy de Maupassant's short stories to the screen in Wise's low-budget period piece *Mademoiselle Fifi* (1944) and tackled the problems of blue-collar home front America in Robson's *Youth Runs Wild* (1944), a deeply underrated film that deserves a wider audience. After the war, fired from RKO, Lewton was cast adrift and produced only three non-genre films of little interest, before his untimely death of a heart attack at the age of forty-seven.

Nemerov organizes his study in a series of engagingly written chapters, starting with his introduction, which links Lewton's horror films to American feelings of fear and uncertainty during the early years of the war and demonstrates how Lewton pleased both the public and critics alike with his literate and realistic approach to the supernatural. Chapter 1, "The Madonna of the Back Yard," deals with the characters played by Simone Simon and Ann Carter in *The Curse of the Cat People*, ostensibly a sequel to *Cat People*, but actually one of the cinema's most alluring and evocative depictions of childhood fantasy. As Irena, Simone Simon, freed of the curse that hung over her in the earlier film, now appears as a simulacrum of the Virgin Mary and a confidante to young Amy Reed (Ann Carter). Using a superb series of frame enlargments, Nemerov links Carter's performance to that of Peggy Ann Garner as Francie Nolan in Elia Kazan's *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (1945) and explores the uneasy relationship between Amy and the reclusive, aging Julia Farren (Julia Dean), whose deranged daughter Barbara (Elizabeth Russell) imagines that Amy is stealing her mother's affection.

Chapter 2, "The Power of the Minor Actor," deals with Skelton Knaggs, a character actor whose pockmarked countenance graced numerous horror films, but who turned in his most nuanced performance as the Finn, a mute deckhand in *The Ghost Ship* (1943), one of Lewton's most unsettling films. Nemerov also explores Knaggs's other film and stage work, all defined by his repellent visage, which typecast him as a social outcast. The chapter closes with a detailed consideration of various "Othered" characters in Lewton's films, as well as the "ballyhoo" methods used to exploit Lewton's works.

Chapter 3 deals with the iconic image of Darby Jones as Carrefour, leader of the undead in *I Walked with a Zombie* (Tourneur, 1943), a tale of voodoo in the West Indies that serves as the backdrop for a retelling of *Jane Eyre*. In a series of dazzling leaps, Nemerov links Darby Jones to Ti Misery, the figurehead of a slave ship, depicting a black man shot with numerous arrows in the manner of Saint Sebastian, which serves as a visual motif in the film, and thence to Jones as "Stringbeans Johnson," dancing in the all-black musical *Broken Strings* (1940) and finally to the penitents' shuffling procession in *The Leopard Man*. All is staged, all is artifice. The world of *I Walked with a Zombie* is created almost entirely in the studio from a visual mosaic of fabrics and flesh tones, light and shadow, and achieves a sort of stylized majesty as an evocation of Lewton's unremittingly bleak universe.

The final chapter, ironically entitled "This Pretty World," focuses on one of Lewton's most nihilistic films, *Bedlam* (Robson, 1946), in which Master George Sims—Boris Karloff, escaping from his endless procession of mad scientist roles for Universal, Columbia, and Monogram—(he respected Lewton immensely for giving him better material) presides over the famous British insane asylum with sadistic glee. As part of a series of "entertainments" devised by Master Sims, he presents the spectacle of The Gilded Boy (Glenn Vernon) in a tableau, covered from head to toe in gold paint.

The boy, one of the inmates of the asylum, recites a poem in honor of the visiting Lord Mortimer (Billy House) and then immediately dies, asphyxiated by the paint which has fatally clogged the pores of his skin. This spectacle of "gilded death" is received by the assembled company with much amusement, but it remains one of the most heartbreaking sequences in all of Lewton's films. Nemerov persuasively argues that the scene also prefigures Lewton's own exile from the film industry. Indeed, shortly after the completion of *Bedlam* and his departure from RKO, Lewton would bounce from Paramount, to MGM, and finally to Universal, where he was assigned to produce movies made by committee, rather than being allowed to create them. Nemerov sees the figure of the Gilded Boy as emblematic of the split between wartime sadism and violence, and the post-war embrace of affluence and rampant consumerism. Arguing that in this new, truly escapist milieu, Lewton had no real angle of approach, Nemerov firmly situates Lewton as a figure of wartime productivity and tragedy; a storyteller for the 1940s, lost in the post-war world.

Nemerov's book gives perhaps the most incisive and detailed interpretation of Lewton's world view as expressed in his films, complete with a copious selection of stills, frame enlargments, and promotional materials to firmly place Lewton within the commercial world of 1940s cinema. The front cover of this arresting volume shows Lewton and Robson sitting in a dubbing theater at RKO watching a rough assembly of *Bedlam*. Robson seems somewhat detached as he watches the film he has just directed, but Lewton, leaning forward, intently views the film with the passionate intensity of an artist whose life depended upon his work. When the opportunity to create that work vanished, so did Lewton's career.

WHEELER WINSTON DIXON is the James Ryan Endowed Professor of Film Studies at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln and, with Gwendolyn Audrey Foster, Editor-in-Chief of the *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*.

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Living Dangerously: The Adventures of Merian C. Cooper, Creator of King Kong

By Mark Cotta Vaz. New York: Villard, 2005. $26.95 cloth. 496 pages.

A decorated pilot who served in both world wars; an adventurer and director of two films of ethnographic interest; an executive in the airline and film industries; a producer of a number of classic films, including S*tagecoach* (1939) and *The Searchers* (1956), and the creative force behind Cinerama: even if Merian C. Cooper hadn't produced and co-directed *King Kong* (1933), his extraordinary life story would beg the question of his obscurity. Born into a well-established Southern family, Cooper's path to adventure began with his expulsion from the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. Although Cooper would later dismiss the event with a light-hearted explanation—"I was high-spirited, loved excitement, took chances, and got caught too many times" (21)—Vaz suggests that Cooper's subsequent years of wandering were in fact a reflection of a deep desire for redemption, particularly in the eyes of his father. In letters home, Cooper writes again and again of the need to live up to his personal code of honor, which compelled him to reject any assistance from his family and to delay his return to Jacksonville until he felt his achievements merited it, although he dreamt of home "like a good Catholic does of heaven" (47). After World War I, in which he served as a fighter pilot, Cooper decided to stay in Europe in order to assist the Poles in their war with the Soviets, during which time he met his future filmmaking partner, Ernest Schoedsack.

A few years and several adventures later, including a daring escape from a Soviet prison camp, Cooper and Schoedsack were reunited when Cooper suggested he join him on a round-the-world voyage with Captain Edward Salisbury, an explorer and expedition filmmaker. Although the footage that would have become Cooper and Schoedsack's first feature film, *The Golden Prince*, was either lost in a fire or later disowned by Cooper, the long voyage did allow Cooper and Schoedsack ample time to plan their next project: a film that would "dramatize exploration" and take as its theme man's struggle for existence in the manner of Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922).

The next four productions of Cooper and Schoedsack present a remarkable trajectory from factual to narrative filmmaking. Cooper's interest in migratory tribes lay behind *Grass* (1925), their stunning documentary depiction of the annual migration of a Persian tribe through incredibly inhospitable terrain was enough of a success to secure financing for a "natural drama" depicting a Laotian family's struggle to protect their land from marauding tigers and elephants. Adhering to their personal filmmaking motto of "distant, difficult, and dangerous," Cooper and Schoedsack took incredible risks in order to capture the footage of tiger attacks and elephant stampedes that made *Chang* (1927) such a sensation. Despite its on-location footage from Africa, their next project—an adaptation of the novel *The Four Feathers* (1929)—was a misfire, handicapped by Adolf Zukor's refusal to dub the picture for sound. However, Cooper's travels in Africa revived his childhood fascination with gorillas and, after a few years gestation while Cooper worked in the aviation industry in New York, the idea for *King Kong* was born.

The chief merit of Vaz's chapters on *King Kong* lies in their synthetic quality. Supplementing existing accounts of the film's production—such as Orville Goldner's and George E. Turner's *The Making of King Kong: The Story Behind a Film Classic* (1978) and *The Girl in the Hairy Paw* (1976), edited by Ronald Gottesman and Harry Geduld—with new information gleaned from Cooper's papers, archived at Brigham Young University, Vaz makes clear the degree to which Cooper saw himself as the "Creator and Boss" of *King Kong*. Vaz calls attention to the film's obvious autobiographical aspects, suggesting that *Kong* was the inevitable end of the creative arc that had begun with *Grass*: "the ultimate true-life movie expedition team would be making a picture about the ultimate movie expedition" (198).

The boy, one of the inmates of the asylum, recites a poem in honor of the visiting Lord Mortimer (Billy House) and then immediately dies, asphyxiated by the paint which has fatally clogged the pores of his skin. This spectacle of "gilded death" is received by the assembled company with much amusement, but it remains one of the most heartbreaking sequences in all of Lewton's films. Nemerov persuasively argues that the scene also prefigures Lewton's own exile from the film industry. Indeed, shortly after the completion of *Bedlam* and his departure from RKO, Lewton would bounce from Paramount, to MGM, and finally to Universal, where he was assigned to produce movies made by committee, rather than being allowed to create them. Nemerov sees the figure of the Gilded Boy as emblematic of the split between wartime sadism and violence, and the post-war embrace of affluence and rampant consumerism. Arguing that in this new, truly escapist milieu, Lewton had no real angle of approach, Nemerov firmly situates Lewton as a figure of wartime productivity and tragedy; a storyteller for the 1940s, lost in the post-war world.

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However, in an omission that is frustrating in a biography, he fails to seize upon Cooper's transformation of his life into cinema—a reflexive and revealing act—as an opportunity to probe beneath the surface of Cooper's carefully managed self-presentation. Cooper's attitudes regarding race, in particular, are not treated in a satisfactory manner. *Things Men Die For*, Cooper's account of his early adventures, published in 1927, contains the following troubling assertion: "The lust for power is in us, we white men. We'll sacrifice anything for the chance to rule. And I believe that it is right that black, brown, and yellow men should be dominated by the white." Vaz tries to neutralize the corrosive racism of this statement by suggesting that Cooper's "note of racial superiority was typical of a southern white man who grew up in times when the American cultural memory still recalled the practice of slavery" (82). Is whipping a village of uncooperative Africans (as Cooper did during the filming of *The Four Feathers*) excusable by the same logic?

Vaz is more comfortable sticking with his vision of Cooper as a cinematic pioneer and committed patriot, a man with the foresight to produce the first full-length Technicolor feature, *Becky Sharp* (1935), and to predict the Cold War twenty years in advance. Cooper's trailblazing spirit and passionate anti-communism converged in his post-war career, as he sought to enlist his filmmaking skills in the fight against communism. Vaz doesn't delve deeply into Cooper's relationship with his longstanding partner John Ford, with whom he produced Westerns that purposely embraced "patriotic themes." His discussion of Cooper's involvement in Cinerama is more detailed, revealing Cooper's passionate faith in the new medium's ability to "arouse the innate patriotism of the people of the United States" and in doing so "save our way of life and civilization," as Cooper described his mission. In his final years, Cooper, still fueled by anti-communist resolve, was increasingly preoccupied with a new frontier—outer space—forecasting space travel and the day when humans would colonize the planets.

Vaz draws heavily on Cooper's own writings—the collection at Brigham Young includes Cooper's unfinished autobiography, intriguingly titled *I am King Kong*, along with numerous letters and journalistic writing—but doesn't seem to consider that Cooper's self-presentation may be anything other than the whole truth, despite his acknowledgement that Cooper "burnished his own legend to a shining luster with each dramatic exploit" (6). Vaz's vapid prose, combined with his failure to adequately contextualize Cooper's achievements in relation to concurrent developments in film history, means that the book fails to paint a vivid picture of either Cooper's life or the times through which he lived. Cooper may have been a "mass of contradictions" as Vaz claims, but this biography does little to illuminate what complex depths he contained.

REBECCA PRIME is a Ph.D. candidate in Critical Studies in UCLA's Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media.

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Sidney Poitier: Man, Actor, Icon

By Aram Goudsouzian. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004. $29.95 cloth. 480 pages.

Despite Morgan Freeman's and Jamie Fox's recent Oscar wins, Hollywood's treatment of African American leading men has been dismal, with few performers offered dramatic roles that present complex characterizations of black manhood. The film industry teems with talented black performers, yet hardly any African American dramatic actors have achieved true Hollywood acceptance: the ability to work regularly. The few include such distinguished performers as Sidney Poitier, Denzel Washington, Don Cheadle, and Freeman. Each has faced a host of public expectations, but no one other than Sidney Poitier has had to do so within an environment of such pivotal change as that which existed during the years following World War II. In a career spanning over five decades, Poitier has appeared on stage and screen as an actor, director, and producer. During this time, he weathered Cold War politics (especially McCarthyism in Hollywood) and the evolving strategies of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. During these political, social, and aesthetic upheavals, Poitier was an often-reluctant symbol of the best and worst of American democracy.

Goudsouzian offers a clear and well-researched overview of Poitier's career, focusing on the 1960s, the seminal decade for a Civil Rights movement that witnessed the shift from the peaceful protests of Martin Luther King, Jr. to the more aggressive tactics of the Black Power and Black Arts movements. In such an environment, Poitier walked a tightrope between tenuous acceptance by the liberal Hollywood establishment and the expectations of millions of people of African descent in both the United States and abroad (especially his home, the Bahamas). For Hollywood insiders, Poitier's presence was proof of the industry's progressive politics. For audiences, however, Poitier was a symbol of American race politics, a distinction that often blurred the borders between the real man and his fictional roles. In acknowledging this context Goudsouzian provides readers with an introduction to the complex effects of this political and aesthetic environment on Poitier's career.

In what way, however, did Sidney Poitier the man influence Sidney Poitier the icon and vice versa? Goudsouzian, relying on press about the star along with Poitier's two autobiographies, attempts to identify the sources of the actor's often-dueling ambitions and demons. Rightly, he looks to Poitier's West Indian youth and identifies the actor's childhood experiences as foundational for his adult actions and attitudes. Here Goudsouzian emphasizes the influence of Poitier's stern, hardworking father, Reginald, although he does so, regrettably, at the expense of exploring more overarching West Indian conventions of masculinity (as formed through slavery and colonialism), along with African American models of manhood that may have affected his later years. These larger influences can tell us much about Poitier's efforts to conform his image to personal and cultural expectations; for example, his early struggles to support his family

However, in an omission that is frustrating in a biography, he fails to seize upon Cooper's transformation of his life into cinema—a reflexive and revealing act—as an opportunity to probe beneath the surface of Cooper's carefully managed self-presentation. Cooper's attitudes regarding race, in particular, are not treated in a satisfactory manner. *Things Men Die For*, Cooper's account of his early adventures, published in 1927, contains the following troubling assertion: "The lust for power is in us, we white men. We'll sacrifice anything for the chance to rule. And I believe that it is right that black, brown, and yellow men should be dominated by the white." Vaz tries to neutralize the corrosive racism of this statement by suggesting that Cooper's "note of racial superiority was typical of a southern white man who grew up in times when the American cultural memory still recalled the practice of slavery" (82). Is whipping a village of uncooperative Africans (as Cooper did during the filming of *The Four Feathers*) excusable by the same logic?

Vaz is more comfortable sticking with his vision of Cooper as a cinematic pioneer and committed patriot, a man with the foresight to produce the first full-length Technicolor feature, *Becky Sharp* (1935), and to predict the Cold War twenty years in advance. Cooper's trailblazing spirit and passionate anti-communism converged in his post-war career, as he sought to enlist his filmmaking skills in the fight against communism. Vaz doesn't delve deeply into Cooper's relationship with his longstanding partner John Ford, with whom he produced Westerns that purposely embraced "patriotic themes." His discussion of Cooper's involvement in Cinerama is more detailed, revealing Cooper's passionate faith in the new medium's ability to "arouse the innate patriotism of the people of the United States" and in doing so "save our way of life and civilization," as Cooper described his mission. In his final years, Cooper, still fueled by anti-communist resolve, was increasingly preoccupied with a new frontier—outer space—forecasting space travel and the day when humans would colonize the planets.

Vaz draws heavily on Cooper's own writings—the collection at Brigham Young includes Cooper's unfinished autobiography, intriguingly titled *I am King Kong*, along with numerous letters and journalistic writing—but doesn't seem to consider that Cooper's self-presentation may be anything other than the whole truth, despite his acknowledgement that Cooper "burnished his own legend to a shining luster with each dramatic exploit" (6). Vaz's vapid prose, combined with his failure to adequately contextualize Cooper's achievements in relation to concurrent developments in film history, means that the book fails to paint a vivid picture of either Cooper's life or the times through which he lived. Cooper may have been a "mass of contradictions" as Vaz claims, but this biography does little to illuminate what complex depths he contained.

REBECCA PRIME is a Ph.D. candidate in Critical Studies in UCLA's Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media.

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while insisting on dignified—though sparse—roles. Furthermore, black masculinity is highly contested terrain in American literary and visual arts, and Poitier's early career in particular was self-consciously engaged in redefining black men on film.

Although this book provides an abundance of biographical information about Poitier's experiences in Hollywood, the coverage of the performer's films rarely shifts beyond that of extended plot summaries or aesthetic evaluations more suitable for movie reviews. The critical assessments of artistic merit here are not put towards an analytical goal: films such as *Buck and the Preacher* (1971) are a "mixed bag" (341) and *Brother John* (1970) is "a disaster of Promethean proportions" (330). These rote observations provide more insight into the author's personal aesthetic criteria than they enlighten readers about the films' place in Poitier's *oeuvre*. The more compelling reasons for a particular film's critical, financial, or political failures are therefore misread as artistic missteps.

Finally, the author's tone approaches that of an outsider lacking an understanding of Poitier's cultural milieu. At their most useful, descriptions of people and places offer colorful background to Poitier's experiences, as when Goudsouzian relates his subject's early experiences in Harlem. At their worst, however, they suggest a lack of critical judgment. For example, and perhaps most egregiously, women are repeatedly described according to physical characteristics—the "beguiling, leggy" Eartha Kitt (130), the "amply endowed" Virginia Maskell (145), Anne Bancroft's "fetchingly" styled hair (217), or Joanna Shimkus's "alluring green eyes" (319). Poitier may have been a chauvinist, but the descriptions are the author's, not the performer's. Moreover, information about Poitier's relationships with Juanita Poitier, Diahann Carroll, and Shimkus is rarely offered as insight into his character or his actions; rather it functions as a back-story to the actor's public life. Poitier's personal relationships appear to suggest his overall attitudes about gender and therefore the author misses an important opportunity to link the actor's interactions with women to his public image of black masculinity. In addition, since women's roles in the Civil Rights movement were increasingly limited by preexisting patriarchal dynamics within the African American community, a productive connection could be made between Poitier's personal life and the political landscape. Why was it so important, for example, for a man to be the representative of the race during this period? Over the decades black intellectuals as diverse as W.E.B. DuBois and Hazel Carby have addressed this question and yet it is not considered here.

Although *Sidney Poitier: Man, Actor, Icon* provides a detailed account of the most productive years in the actor's career, along with brief considerations of his youth and later projects, the biography fails to synthesize Poitier's contradictory roles as man, actor, and icon. Unfortunately, the primary focus is on the actor's parts on stage and screen, rather than on the tensions among the responsibilities laid out by Goudsouzian's title. Poitier remains a compartmentalized man, solely defined by his career as an actor. If one is looking for further insight into Poitier's experiences and motivations, it might be best to read his two autobiographies, *This Life* (1981) and *The Measure of a Man: A Spiritual Autobiography* (2001). Their perspective may be one-sided, but readers will gain a greater understanding of the inner thoughts and motivations of a man who, for the majority of his life, had the expectations of thousands on his shoulders.

PAULA J. MASSOOD is Associate Professor of Film Studies at Brooklyn College, City University of New York. She is the author of *Black City Cinema* (Temple University Press, 2003).

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Simone Signoret: The Star as Cultural Sign

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Simone Signoret is irresistible. In *Les Diaboliques* (1955), she plays a stiletto-clad schoolteacher who calmly drowns her lover in the bathtub, wraps him in a tablecloth, tucks him into a large wicker basket, and deposits him in the back of her car, all with breathtaking efficiency. What a contrast to Martine Carol's tragic courtesan in Max Ophuls's *Lola Montès*, released the same year, and to Brigitte Bardot's gamine-goddess in *And God Created Woman*, released in 1956. Signoret's skill and cheek had already been on display in *Manèges* (1949), in which she laughs and laughs and laughs, horribly and deliciously, at her pathetic cuckold of a husband. In *Room at the Top* (1959), for which she won an Oscar and the Palme d'Or in 1960, Signoret plays that rare character: a sexually experienced, aging woman who is nonetheless beautiful and vulnerable. That her characters are arrested, paralyzed, and dead, respectively, at the end of these three films, matters little. We retain an image of Simone Signoret as an audacious woman, a highly skilled actor, and a humanitarian.

Hayward begins her ambitious book with a short biography and career summary, moving from Signoret's childhood, to her intellectual awakening in Saint-Germain-des Près, to her early film roles during the Occupation era. Hayward cites Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of the "chronotope," (the spatio-temporal structures of the novel) to underscore the importance of the historical moment and cultural milieu in Signoret's life, charting her movements from the placid suburb of Neuilly where she grew up to the intellectually thrilling Café de Flore, where she met Picasso, the Prévert brothers, and her first husband, Yves Allégret. Much is made of the irony that Signoret—a woman of the Left and a courageous defender of human rights—ended up living with Yves Montand on the Place Dauphine, two steps from those temples of the law, the Palais de Justice and the police headquarters.

Bakhtin left behind, Hayward gets on with her book's main tasks—to situate broadly Signoret's work in the sociopolitical events of her time (the Occupation, post-war modernization, Algeria, and the repressive discourses on femininity) and to understand the paradox of Signoret's career trajectory: while young and beautiful, she was only moderately in demand, but as she aged and grew heavy, her career thrived. Why, in the eras in which Martine Carol and Brigitte

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Bardot represented the summit of female beauty, did the aging, puffy Signoret continue to attract filmmakers and intrigue viewers? The answer, according to Hayward, can be found in Signoret's "modernity." "Signoret was the intelligent woman in a period when the focus was the body beautiful and not the mind, a time when the nation's (female) body was to be clean and domesticated" (18). Hayward suggests, then, that Signoret succeeded by differentiating herself from younger, more beautiful competitors through the develop of a distinctive "minimalist" acting style and by capitalizing on her aging body to get interesting roles.

In attempting to place Signoret in her historical moment, Hayward identifies a tension between the modernity of Signoret's roles, appearance and public persona, and the repressive discourses on femininity in and beyond her films, engendered in part by a "masculinist cult" around the French Resistance in the post-war era (35). Drawing on Kristin Ross's work on gender in post-war France, Hayward argues that in *Les Diaboliques*, Signoret "subverts the sanctioned myth of the woman as clean" (16) and in *Les Sorcières de Salem* (1957), based on Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* from 1952, Signoret "embodies courage" and a "refusal to compromise" (16). These are reasonable assertions, but Hayward's investigation into Signoret's longevity requires her to engage in the more prosaic (and, to my mind, much more interesting) job of figuring out exactly why Signoret was such a good actor.

It is no easy task to describe with precision the work of an actor. James Naremore's *Acting in the Cinema* (1990) and Ben Brewster and Lea Jacobs's *Theatre to Cinema* (1998) have provided us particularly useful models of performance analysis in terms of describing concretely and situating historically the actor's work. Hayward's book is more properly placed in the lineage of Richard Dyer's work on stars, given her interest in the ideological valence of Signoret's star image and in her conception of Signoret as a "text" whose connotations shift from "beautiful" to "political" to "international star" to "aged." Hayward's book also draws on the methods of recent star studies by Guy Austin (*Stars in Modern French Film* [2003]) and Ginette Vincendeau (*Stars and Stardom in French Cinema* [2000]), works that pay attention to both film aesthetics and the politics of representation. Hayward characterizes Signoret's acting as "minimalist" in that it that relies less on dialogue than on small, precise gestures and relative immobility. "[H]er gestures are at a bare minimum, yet speak volumes: a glance, a lifting of an eyebrow, a moue from her very full lips, a shrug of the shoulders, her dismissive hands—these constitute a formidable repertoire of expressivity that requires no speech, or very little" (33). Her purposeful stride, her way of stamping out her cigarettes, her habit of planting her hands on her hips were also key elements of her repertoire, or what Naremore would call Signoret's "ideolect"—a collection of characteristic gestures she carried with her with her from film to film. At its best, Hayward's study provides detailed analysis of Signoret's movements, costumes, and vocal delivery, but now and then, Hayward lapses into fan language: "A flicker from her eyes, a narrowing of her lids—nothing more needed to be said. A pout and you knew exactly where you stood. She could seethe without moving, and she could seduce with only so much as a look" (30). Her impressive analysis of Signoret's key 1950s films reveals that Signoret—even when she has top billing in a film—tends not to be framed in tight, fetishizing close ups, unlike Hollywood's female stars. She attributes this partly to classical French cinema's historic paucity of close ups, but also concludes that "at the peak of her stardom and good looks, Signoret occupied the least typical position for a female star. . . . She occupies, then, like most male leads, a place of action, not passivity" (95). Style, then, reinforces her characters' agency.

Hayward's study of Signoret makes one want to know more about acting traditions in French cinema. In her contextualization of Signoret's performances, Hayward usually moves directly to the political context of the day, leapfrogging over the more immediate context of the French film industry and its performance traditions. Hayward reveals how Signoret symbolizes rebellion and resists norms around femininity, but there are too few insights on how she was a product of French classical cinema. Was Signoret, in fact, a *monstre sacré* straight out of the Jean Gabin and Arletty mold, revered for her *culot* as much as her distinctive physical tics and her vocal delivery? Or was she simply a very fine *acteur de composition*, capable of incarnating a disparate collection of characters? She may well have been a "minimalist," but in relation to whom, exactly? Exploring how Signoret fits into classical French cinema might also have helped Hayward understand why Signoret was not taken up by the New Wave filmmakers. Did the looser plots and rougher look of the New Wave films make Signoret's precision and polish less desirable? Luckily for us, Signoret didn't sit around waiting for Godard and Truffaut to call. As Hayward's detailed descriptions of films such as *Le Chat* (1971) and *Rude journée pour la reine* (1973) indicate, Signoret's late work is just as satisfying as her earlier gems.

KELLEY CONWAY, author of *Chanteuse in the City: The Realist Singer in French Film* (University of California Press, 2004), teaches film in the Department of Communication Arts at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

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Women Filmmakers Refocusing

Edited by Jacqueline Levitin, Judith Plessis, and Valerie Raoul. New York: Routledge, 2003. Cloth, $90.00 cloth; $34.95 paper. 496 pages.

What difference *does* it make when a woman is behind the camera? Are the categories we once used to talk about the representation of women still valid in films that cross generic, ethnic, national, and linguistic boundaries? How has the development of new technology transformed women's access to production and distribution?

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vive the excitement of feminist approaches to women's filmmaking in the early 1970s—approaches which transformed film studies, changing the questions we pose to films and their audiences. Thirty years later, the idea of a legible or identifiable woman's point of view seems increasingly problematic. As the antiquated notion of an essential female or feminist identity is replaced by more polyphonic concepts of diversity, rupture, inequality, and disunity, questions about gender have become inextricable from issues of race, class, ethnic, and national identities.

By taking the multiplicity of identity as one of its central points of departure, *Women Filmmakers Refocusing* responds to this complex problem with a range of practical and theoretical approaches that explore the ongoing struggles of female filmmakers around the globe in an overwhelmingly male-dominated industry. Reflecting both the Canadian and francophone interests of its three editors, the volume emphasizes the notion of both cultural or gender identity as a palimpsest of overlapping discourses and competing contexts. The book's best attribute is its foregrounding of issues such as exile, hybridity, diaspora, boundary-crossing, and what the editors describe as the "national and cultural montage" evident in both the mode of production and the critical subjectivities of these *auteurs*.

In a wide range of introductions, short essays, and interviews with female directors, the book dedicates itself to the task of preserving, situating, and theorizing the still unrecognized contribution of women around the world to documentary, experimental, independent, and commercial cinema. Rather than deconstructing the work of male directors from a feminist point of view, which has become the trend for many feminist film scholars, the almost predominantly female contributors (including Kathryn Barnwell, Catherine Fowler, Angela Martin, and filmmakers Nicole Giguère and Anne Wheeler) focus on the ways that women operate within the industry economically, ideologically, and aesthetically.

Beginning with a brief essay by prolific feminist film scholar E. Ann Kaplan, *Women Filmmakers Refocusing* attempts to track the paradigmatic shifts that have characterized women's resistance to patriarchal society through the appropriation of the "male gaze" and the media technologies that implant and sustain it. Shifting emphasis away from American directors, the book divides it focus between the work of established European directors, non-Western female directors working in (and between) postcolonial contexts, the representation of minority women in countries with dominant cultures, and contemporary Canadian filmmakers. In addition to including essays on and by renowned Western filmmakers such as Chantal Akerman, Helma Sanders Brahms, Doris Dörrie, Agnieszka Holland, Sally Potter, Margarethe von Trotta, and Lina Wertmüller, a large section of the book is devoted to accomplished transnational directors Deepa Mehta and Pratibha Parmar, whose films self-consciously straddle the divide between their ancestral home India and the Western nations in which they live and work.

Jacqueline Levitin's introduction to Mehta, which traces the trajectory of her career through an interview, reveals the competing and often contradictory challenges that define not only Mehta's individual career, but the work of women filmmakers everywhere. The journey from Mehta's deeply personal feature-film debut *Sam and Me* (1991), to *Fire* (1996), her first film made in India, to her startling collaboration with George Lucas on the "Young Indiana Jones Chronicles" television series (1992), to the commercial film *Camilla* (1993), which starred Jessica Tandy and Bridget Fonda, to her Indian Partition story *Earth* (1998), suggests the ways in which her work transcends the boundaries between developed and developing worlds, as well the commercial divide between the marginal and the mainstream.

Keenly attuned to ways in which practical, technological, and financial concerns both determine and constrain aesthetic effects—especially for women working at the periphery of the industry—the book is concerned less with formal analysis than it is with the perspective of the women who struggle to make movies at all. Depending on the needs of the reader, this unusual feature of the book can be viewed as either strength or weakness. For those looking for primary sources in which female filmmakers share their own experiences in their own diverse voices, the book's eclectic collection of interviews, panel discussions, and excerpts from master classes is of inestimable value. For critics seeking a new way of approaching the complicated status of female subjectivity through filmic analysis, the book's practical focus lacks theoretical rigor.

While many of the essays in *Women Filmmakers Refocusing* include textual analysis, discussion of individual works tends to be brief. Since the book stems from a conference on international women filmmakers held in Vancouver in 1999, the essays are, for the most part, cursory explorations of the work of particular directors, or particular issues, rather than critical interventions in existing scholarship or rigorous theoretical interrogations. Such synopses can only suggest rather than explicate the nuances of the filmmakers' works and the larger representational issues that are informed by their efforts. While the brevity of the more scholarly contributions is understandable, it may leave readers wishing that many of the ideas were more substantially fleshed out.

Nevertheless, *Women Filmmakers Refocusing* is recommended for its readability and overall usefulness in undergraduate cinema and women's studies classrooms. The book is a pleasurable, accessible, and informative guide to filmmakers who are largely overlooked by both academic and mainstream accounts of cinema. Considering how difficult it remains to locate and view films by women directors, the editors' guide to selected film and video sources is a godsend; likewise, the lengthy bibliography expertly organizes the expansive field of feminist film studies into manageable categories. Though the tone of book may not be sophisticated enough for advanced students, the relative anonymity of many of the subjects, including female directors associated with the Malaysian New Wave and contemporary Kenyan cinema, renders it an invaluable educational tool.

ARA OSTERWEIL is Assistant Professor of Film at Muhlenberg College.
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Contemporary American Independent Film: From the Margins to the Mainstream

Edited by Chris Holmlund and Justin Wyatt. New York: Routledge, 2004. $105.00 cloth; $29.95 paper. 299 pages.

In 1989, Jon Jost, after surveying the output of those working under the banner of independent film during the Reagan era, concluded: "It is likely fair, then, to write the obit of the American independent on the wall in any form distinguishable from Hollywood—if not today, then tomorrow" (57). Given the logic of Jost's argument, which equates commercialization with capitulation to the Hollywood paradigm, one can only regard the success of *sex, lies and videotape* later that year as the realization of his damning vision. At the same time, there has been a tendency on the part of others, such as Peter Biskind most recently, to regard that landmark representation of yuppie transgression as a beginning of sorts, for not only Steven Soderbergh, Miramax, and the Sundance Film Festival, all of which rose to unprecedented prominence with its release, but also an American independent cinema in general. Chris Holmlund and Justin Wyatt, by contrast, prefer instead to characterize independent filmmaking as a heterogeneous practice that has endured since the 1910s and "independent film" as a relative term that exists on a continuum with, rather than in opposition to, more mainstream products. As a result their volume explores independent film in the many guises it has assumed in recent decades, from family fare to gay porn, women's work to exploitation cinema, diasporic film to Internet animation.

While the diversity of films addressed in *Contemporary American Independent Film* and thus included under its titular rubric makes untenable any sweeping generalizations about an indie cinema conceived of in monolithic terms, a trend with which the volume is centrally concerned is the movement over the last fifteen years on the part of the independent sector in the direction described by the volume's subtitle: from the margin to (or at least toward) the mainstream. Thus the anthology engages, at turns directly and indirectly, with the series of events that have endowed independent film with an unprecedented visibility and prestige: the rise of the "mini-majors," the use of "independent" as a mass-marketing label, and the institutionalization of an alternative film culture through myriad film festivals, cable television channels, print publications, online forums, and award ceremonies. Given this backdrop, the book starts in an interesting fashion.

The first of five parts, "Critical Formations" contains five previously published essays by Annette Insdorf, Jonas Mekas, Ed Lowry, David E. James, and Jost. These essays propose definitions or ask questions which are addressed in the rest if the book: is independent cinema distinguished by style, social vision, a particular relationship to the market economy, or the singularity of its authorial vision? Which film movements or trends does it encompass, and which is it informed by and/or engaged with? To what extent and in what ways is it shaped by dominant cinema, subcultural social formations, and culture at large? Yet because all of these foundational articles were published in 1989 or earlier and thus in advance of the decade during which independent cinema was "Miramaximized," they frame such issues in an uncanny fashion, giving voice to certain assumptions about creativity and independence that seem far removed from a contemporary historical moment shaped by the ongoing expansion of corporate power and copyright law. So, for example, Mekas's discussion of film artists who "have decommercialized film to the point where they can proudly say that they are working for no other reason but the greater glory of the art of cinema" (40) seems anachronistic in the light of the big-business context for much of the independent sector.

It is precisely these effects that the contributions to part 2, "Cult Film/Cool Film," speak to as they examine contemporary independent cinema in terms of the values it espouses, the style it cultivates, the attitude it displays and, finally, the chord it strikes in its (niche) audience. For example, in "'Queen of the indies': Parker Posey's Niche Stardom and Taste Cultures of Independent Film," Diane Negra identifies the appeal of indie cinema's leading lady as linked to her ability to combine "aristocratic hauteur and downtown street style" (76). Presenting Posey's star image as representative of an ideological tension intrinsic to a more mainstream independent cinema, she concludes, "the reconciling of apparent class disparities Posey achieves is in keeping with the current marketing mandates of independent film itself as it bids for both bourgeois and bohemian artistic credentials" (76).

The rest of the volume is notable for the way it distinguishes itself from two comprehensive and pioneering books in the field. The first is Emanuel Levy's *Cinema of Outsiders: The Rise of American Independent Film* (1999), which examines in detail the careers of a wide array and long list of independent directors. As indicated by the title of his text, Levy identifies the subjects of his scrutiny as outsiders, yet for him "outside" is a social location linked less to identity than attitude. Holmlund and Wyatt, however, stake out a different "outside" in parts 3 and 4 of their book by looking beyond the white men—Quentin Tarantino, Wes Anderson, Kevin Smith, and Paul Thomas Anderson, to name the most prominent—who achieved their success in their twenties and thirties and who typically figure so prominently in discussions, both academic and popular, of independent film. So, the section on "Iconoclasts and Auteurs" features articles on John Sayles, Haile Gerima, and underground gay pornographer Wakefield Poole, while the following section, "Identity Hooks —Cultural Binds," looks at communities of typically marginalized filmmakers by engaging with the representation of gay and lesbian children in queer cinema, the continued ghettoization of women's cinema, and the hybrid practices of Asian American filmmakers working within and between two cinematic traditions and cultural milieus. Of particular note among this collection of essays is José B. Capino's "Seminal fantasies: Wakefield Poole, Pornography, Independent Cinema and the Avant-garde"; not only does it shed light on a figure unknown to a large portion of the filmgoing popula-

tion, but it also lays bare the stakes involved in the classification of filmmakers and their work better than any essay in the volume.

The second pioneering text of note is Deirdre Pribram's *Cinema and Culture: Independent Film in the United States, 1980–2001* (2002), which shares with Holmlund and Wyatt's work an interest in the influence identity politics has had on independent cinema. Yet while Pribram is concerned first and foremost with textual politics, *Contemporary American Independent Film* devotes its fifth and final part to sites other than the film itself (or its production) where independent status is negotiated. "Shifting Markets, Changing Media," begins with a look at the marketing strategies employed by two independent works from the 1970s, *Benji* (Joe Camp, 1974) and *The Savage is Loose* (George C. Scott, 1974), and then moves onto discussion of two exhibition venues that both feed and feed off of independent film culture: the Internet and the specialty channels Sundance and IFC. As engaging as this final section of the volume is, it only whets the appetite. As Holmlund herself notes in the book's introduction, there is a great need for more work of this variety since much remains to be said about the political economy of film festivals, the rebirth of the cine-club, and many other topics related to the dissemination of independent film. Equally if not more pressing, however, is the need for further discussion of the topic Patricia Zimmerman broaches with fascinating results in her article "Digital Deployment(s)": that is, the nature of image-making in the midst of a "war on terrorism." While Zimmerman attends specifically to cybercultural responses to 9/11 and its aftermath, which have been realized through either Flash animation or video-streaming, her work opens the door to a host of other issues that are of central importance to those with an intellectual and emotional investment in the possibilities of independent expression and cinematic form.

CORINN COLUMPAR is a professor of Cinema Studies and English at the University of Toronto.

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Film Art Phenomena

By Nicky Hamlyn. London: BFI Publishing, 2003. $80.00 cloth; $28.95 paper. 256 pages.

A Critical Cinema 4: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers

By Scott MacDonald. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. $65.00 cloth; $29.95 paper. 399 pages.

A handsomely produced primer on experimental cinema, *Film Art Phemomena* provides basic categories through which to understand the various strategies of transforming visual imagery from the 1960s to the present, primarily in Britain and the United States. This is a book of descriptive film presentation, not a theoretical volume or a history. Described as treating film "conceptually," the text actually is short on theoretical concepts, even those that might be borrowed from art-world formalism. Concepts here are as basic as the frame, the support of the camera, or space and place. Scant attention is paid to any previous writing on avant-garde film. It is copiously illustrated and serves as a useful introduction to many artists' works; it provides a basis for further exploration of what visual frames, for example, actually mean, or how they work, or how we perceive them, or what their role is in history. But it should be supplemented by other volumes that undertake a more complex and substantial investigation of all the concepts mentioned by Hamlyn.

Scott MacDonald's *A Critical Cinema 4: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers* takes on the work of mourning, with its long interview with Stan Brakhage casting a huge shadow of grief and retrospection over the rest of the volume. MacDonald's previous three volumes of interviews had never included a conversation with Brakhage, and here he tells us why. After an early rebuff, MacDonald became hesitant. Then Brakhage's failing health spurred him on to arrange a series of telephone conversations and one meeting at Cornell University that he edits here not as a unity, but as a series of sections marked with the dates of their occurrence. Much of the terrain is familiar to those who were able to attend the question-and-answer sessions that followed Brakhage's screenings, but the audience for this book will not necessarily have had that opportunity. Touchingly, almost any image seems to prompt Brakhage to a reflection on his own life; a question about a tearful shot of his first wife Jane fingering a locket containing a photo of her father in *Scenes from Under Childhood* (1967–70) leads to Brakhage's discussion of a marriage that had been negotiated through the lens of an autobiographical filmmaking practice that made her and the children subjects of his works. Brakhage tells us his second wife, Marilyn, refused to be filmed, leading to the filmmaker's definitive shift from autobiography. Domesticity turns out to be a center to which Brakhage and MacDonald return repeatedly in the conversation, Brakhage extolling the everyday for its high drama and sexuality. Yet a sense of guilt figures as well, with Brakhage taking stock of what a life devoted to film costs.

MacDonald generously plays his role of great admirer, praising the colors in one film, reminiscing about another film as a transformative experience. Brakhage recounts his role as shaman, telling us of the trances entailed in shooting his films. In between, there are many specific references to the different processes and strategies explored in the making of individual films. Inherent in these exchanges, then, is a need to memorialize.

Personal filmmakers of the 1950s and 60s, the ones that MacDonald loves, have always been the inspiration for his interview volumes. His approach remains largely intuitive, driven by questions of personal taste, by which works affected him in certain ways at a given screening. The interview with P. Adams Sitney, who is the second critic to be included in the volumes, focuses on Sitney's witnessing the flowering of personal filmmakers in this fertile period and represents MacDonald's effort to recover the history of those early screenings.

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In contrast to the loving strokes that MacDonald brings to the Brakhage interview, he is more confrontational with Abigail Child, an artist, he admits, who puzzled him (as did Yvonne Rainer), with an aesthetic that left him cold. He says to her of her remarkable series of films made between 1981 and 1989, *Is this What You Were Born For?*: "I had a very hard time with that work when I was first seeing it. I just didn't know what to do with it. It seemed so over the top. I still have trouble with it." Child knows what she wants to say, however, and simply, thankfully, takes charge of the interview, instead of walking out.

A fascinating interview with Jill Godmilow emphasizes, at her insistence, the political motivations behind her projects. MacDonald then couples this with a discussion with Harun Farocki and Godmilow about his film, *The Indistinguishable Fire* (1969), and her "remake" of it as *What Farocki Taught* (1998). It ends with Farocki saying how seeing her film helps him see his own, freshly, behind it.

Several interviews focus on single films: Jim McBride speaks on *David Holzman's Diary* (1967) and Peter Kubelka on *Unsere Afrikareise* (1966). Chantal Akerman's interview focuses on her "place" trilogy, *D'est* (1993), *Sud* (1999), and *De l'autre côté* (2002). What can be one's response to the *Critical Cinema* series, except gratitude? To round out the volume there are further fascinating glimpses into the thinking of filmmakers such as the master of collage Chuck Workman, the queer artist of abstraction Lawrence Brose, the examiner of Eastern European found footage Peter Forgacs, the Iranian born feminist artist Shirin Neshat, and video artist Ellen Spiro.

MAUREEN TURIM is Professor of English and Film and Media Studies at the University of Florida. She is the author of several books, including *Abstraction in Avant-Garde Films* (UMI Research Press, 1985), as well as over eighty articles.

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Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity

By Edward Dimendberg. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004. $24.95 paper. 352 pages.

Among the most exciting American film scholarship of the past decade are those works that explore issues of "space" and "spatiality" in the cinema. This diverse body of writing has focused principally upon two general topics—the unique symbiotic relationship of the cinema and the city, on the one hand, and the different sociocultural and historical spaces, whether built or "imagined," created for and by film spectators, on the other. Several of the leading scholars exploring this rich "territory"—Giuliana Bruno, Anne Friedberg, and Miriam Hansen, among them—have adapted feminist perspectives to reveal the specifically gendered shape historically given to urban spaces mapped on screen. These scholars consistently draw upon the work of Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, and their Weimar associates and take special inspiration from the ideas of *flânerie* explored in Benjamin's unfinished Arcades project. Indeed, these writers are largely responsible for pushing Weimar thought to the forefront of American film studies, where it remains to this day.

Although its primary topic is ostensibly film noir, Edward Dimendberg's long-anticipated *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* is, first and foremost, a vital and lasting contribution to this body of writing on cinematic space. Dimendberg's work both expands and refines film studies' abiding interest in the cinema and the city by revealing how film noir does not simply represent the American city, but also critically interrogates the paradoxes of post-war urban space. Dimendberg's book combines a critical study of American urban philosophy and policy after World War II with a revisionist examination of film noir as a historical category. Dimendberg insists that the decrepit urban spaces favored by film noir—those back alleys and derelict hotels celebrated by noir aficionados—need to be contextualized within the profound transformation underway in the American city during the 1940s and 1950s. In this way, *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* rejects the familiar thematic readings traditionally given to film noir's distinct topography and instead excavates a new historical specificity from within the films.

Looking alternately at New York and Los Angeles, Dimendberg interweaves detailed histories of the political and philosophical struggles driving the forces of change at work in each city with close readings of individual films that grapple with spatial issues relevant to these same cities. The chapters move roughly chronologically, tracing the metamorphosis of American urban space during the post-war years from densely concentrated *centripetal* cities to diffused *centrifugal* cities, a paradigm shift brought on by the twin forces of widespread suburbanization and intense highway development. Dimendberg's convincing knowledge of architecture and urban theory allows him to establish a context in which to explore the spatial patterns and predilections of film noir and its use of specific urban sites and types of locations. Viewed from the perspective of urban history and theory, key landmarks such as the Times Square of *Killer's Kiss* and the Bunker Hill of *Kiss Me Deadly* (both 1955) are shown to serve not simply as iconic symbols of location cities, but also as emblems of a changing order, vestiges of the centripetal city that was on the wane in the 1940s and 50s and which is evoked with deep nostalgia throughout those films noir that seek to capture its rhythm of unexpected close encounters.

One of the great pleasures of *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* lies in Dimenberg's close reading of little-known late noir gems such as Budd Boetticher's *The Killer Is Loose* (1958) and Irving Lerner's *City of Fear* (1959), films which Dimendberg holds up as crucial attempts to map and understand the emergent centrifugal city. Throughout discussions of individual films, *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* displays a theoretical sophistication that is a signature feature of recent writing on cinematic space. Dimendberg goes a step further here by looking beyond the familiar roster of Weimar thinkers typically evoked in discussions of the cinema and the city to explore the work of theorists lesser known to film studies, such as Ernst Bloch and Henri Lefebvre, who are, nevertheless, equally relevant to film studies. As Dimendberg reveals, Lefebvre's close attention to the effects of certain larger rhythms, abstract patterns of movement and speed, upon urban space remains especially valuable for understanding how the city is rendered and explored through moving images.

Occasionally, Dimendberg's evident expertise in the work of European theorists seems to be applied overzealously. Quite frequently, the discussions of films are peppered with fragmentary citations of work by Jean Baudrillard, Guy Debord, Bernd Jager, and a host of others—citations which, because of their necessary brevity, cannot do justice to their subjects and seem unnecessary embellishments rather than supporting ideas. At times as well, Dimendberg's long—although genuinely fascinating—passages through urban theory and history threaten to "overshadow" the topic of film noir until, many pages later, a film is finally evoked.

In truth, *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* is a very selective work that discusses at length relatively few films. As with any work on film noir, one can quarrel with the selection of films made by Dimendberg, and wonder especially at the exclusion of major and minor works that are apposite to his arguments, such as, for example, *Mildred Pierce* (1945) or *Shield for Murder* (1954). Certainly, Dimendberg's overall emphasis upon outdoor urban locations barely accounts for the closed, *interior* spaces and states of mind that remain essential to film noir of the 1940s and 50s. And yet, his careful selection of films is also one of the more valuable qualities of his book since it allows him to deliberately avoid the task of listing and canonizing which is the albatross around the neck of all too many studies of film noir.

One fault, which should not be blamed entirely on its author, of *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity* is the terrible quality and frequent illegibility of many of the film stills that serve as illustrations. The increased use of poor-quality digital images is one of the more depressing trends in aca-

demic publishing in this country and one that we can only hope will be fixed by a marked improvement in available reproduction technology or a sensible adjustment of budgets. Fortunately, Dimendberg's thoroughly original scholarship and finely wrought argument more than compensate for the muddy images.

HADEN GUEST, formerly Curator of the University of Southern California Warner Bros. Archive, is Director of the Harvard Film Archive.
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Ghouls, Gimmicks and Gold: Horror Films and the American Movie Business, 1953–1968

By Kevin Heffernan. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004. $22.95 paper. 304 pages.

Planks of Reason: Essays on the Horror Film

Revised edition. Edited by Barry Keith Grant and Christopher Sharrett. Toronto: Scarecrow Press, 2004. $45.00 paper. 428 pages.

Before video games, television, and the Internet, kids used to spend all day at matinees, but this became harder in the 1950s as families moved far from downtown movie theaters. How did the neighborhood theaters adapt to the many challenges the movie industry faced in the post-war years? How did they lure both kids and grown-ups to theaters? How did they deal with the troubling shortage of films that followed the 1948 *Paramount* decision? And how did the film industry profit from the very television industry that initially undercut its own profits? These are some of the key questions that Kevin Heffernan answers in his industrial history of the horror film. The *Paramount* decision was supposed to help out the independent theaters which had long suffered under the iron fist of block-booking. But the "nabes," as they were called in the trades—the author's primary information source—were in even worse shape after 1948. The studios weren't making enough films and, equally importantly, the films they were making were often widescreen color extravaganzas, or shot using the 3-D process. Theater owners were left paying the bills to equip their cinemas.

Having covered the rise of 3-D and its use in *House of Wax* (1953) and *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), Heffernan discuses the Hammer Studio's films, the rise of exhibitor financing, American International Pictures' runaway productions, and the turn towards "adult" horror signaled by *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *Night of the Living Dead* (1968). He devotes a chapter to Corman's Poe adaptations and the scenery-chewing Vincent Price and also examines how leasing packages of horror films to television in the 1950s and 60s financially bolstered the floundering film industry, while whetting a new cinephiliac appetite for movie monsters. And he analyzes *Peeping Tom* (1960), which, as Joan Hawkins has argued in *Cutting Edge: Art-Horror and the Horrific Avant-Garde* (2000), embodies a perfect marriage of high art and exploitation. Or, as Heffernan and the trades might put it, the film brought together "mass" and "class." Indeed, the proper balance between mass and class—the cravenly popular and the artistically inclined—was an issue of ongoing industrial concern throughout the 1953–68 period.

Many of the films of this era sporadically abandon narrative to flaunt their aesthetic gimmicks, as in the 3-D *House of Wax*, where a hawker directly addresses the camera and vigorously flings a paddle ball at viewers. Heffernan argues that the "ascendancy of the cinema of attractions at the expense of the cinema of narrative integration was . . . to affect traditional aesthetic norms of narrative plausibility, character consistency, and verisimilitude in acting . . . These features, all with their roots in the cinema of attractions, would continue to be the strongest markers of genre film's low cultural status. The carnival barker, for a time banished to the sidewalk outside the theater, was about to take over the director's chair" (68–69). Though some purists may object to Heffernan's use of "cinema of attractions," usually confined to discussions of early cinema, to describe feature-length horror films, his arguments about the ways that spectacle waylays narrative in such films are convincing and the term seems apt.

As for the carnival barker in the director's chair, *Ghouls, Gimmicks and Gold* makes a major breakthrough in discussing William Castle, a director often lightly dismissed as a huckster. Castle was a master of publicity, famously rigging up theater seats with vibrating devices to buzz viewers during *The Tingler* (1959) and (ostensibly) offering viewers a chance to decide a villain's fate with a "punishment poll" in the final reel of *Mr. Sardonicus* (1961). Castle delighted in the fun of a good scare and readily admitted that he was more showman than "auteur." For most of his career, this guy was all mass, no class, and proud of it, though he did shift towards "class" as the producer of *Rosemary's Baby* (1968).

Heffernan pays more attention to Castle than most writers, but his book would be stronger if it addressed what one might call "the Hitchcock–Castle dialectic." More than enough ink has been spilled on readings of Hitchcock's films, yet his marketing tactics have received much less attention. Hitchcock's movies may belong in the "class" camp, but his ironic scare master persona is clearly indebted to Castle. Though the self-promoting "Alfred Hitchcock Presents" TV show dates to 1955, three years before Castle debuted as a filmmaker with *Macabre*—taking out life insurance, he claimed, in case anyone died of fright while viewing the film—the campy quips that Hitch would develop to market his own high-end productions are (arguably) indebted to Castle's own marketing strategies. And Hitchcock's "no one will be admitted after the film has begun" gimmick for *Psycho* (1960) was clearly a Castle move. In general, Heffernan needed to explain *Psycho*'s influence on the horror business. Here, he could have also discussed Castle's *Homicidal* (1961) instead of simply describing it as "*Psycho*-derived." With its transvestite killer, *Homicidal* was clearly designed to cash in on *Psycho*, but Castle's knife-wielding maniac is a woman ruined by patriarchal, not matriarchal oppression. It's an interesting film, not just a *Psycho* rip-off.

Heffernan candidly states that he is not an economic determinist. The films "are too interesting to be reduced to

demic publishing in this country and one that we can only hope will be fixed by a marked improvement in available reproduction technology or a sensible adjustment of budgets. Fortunately, Dimendberg's thoroughly original scholarship and finely wrought argument more than compensate for the muddy images.

HADEN GUEST, formerly Curator of the University of Southern California Warner Bros. Archive, is Director of the Harvard Film Archive.
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Ghouls, Gimmicks and Gold: Horror Films and the American Movie Business, 1953–1968

By Kevin Heffernan. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004. $22.95 paper. 304 pages.

Planks of Reason: Essays on the Horror Film

Revised edition. Edited by Barry Keith Grant and Christopher Sharrett. Toronto: Scarecrow Press, 2004. $45.00 paper. 428 pages.

Before video games, television, and the Internet, kids used to spend all day at matinees, but this became harder in the 1950s as families moved far from downtown movie theaters. How did the neighborhood theaters adapt to the many challenges the movie industry faced in the post-war years? How did they lure both kids and grown-ups to theaters? How did they deal with the troubling shortage of films that followed the 1948 *Paramount* decision? And how did the film industry profit from the very television industry that initially undercut its own profits? These are some of the key questions that Kevin Heffernan answers in his industrial history of the horror film. The *Paramount* decision was supposed to help out the independent theaters which had long suffered under the iron fist of block-booking. But the "nabes," as they were called in the trades—the author's primary information source—were in even worse shape after 1948. The studios weren't making enough films and, equally importantly, the films they were making were often widescreen color extravaganzas, or shot using the 3-D process. Theater owners were left paying the bills to equip their cinemas.

Having covered the rise of 3-D and its use in *House of Wax* (1953) and *Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1954), Heffernan discuses the Hammer Studio's films, the rise of exhibitor financing, American International Pictures' runaway productions, and the turn towards "adult" horror signaled by *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and *Night of the Living Dead* (1968). He devotes a chapter to Corman's Poe adaptations and the scenery-chewing Vincent Price and also examines how leasing packages of horror films to television in the 1950s and 60s financially bolstered the floundering film industry, while whetting a new cinephiliac appetite for movie monsters. And he analyzes *Peeping Tom* (1960), which, as Joan Hawkins has argued in *Cutting Edge: Art-Horror and the Horrific Avant-Garde* (2000), embodies a perfect marriage of high art and exploitation. Or, as Heffernan and the trades might put it, the film brought together "mass" and "class." Indeed, the proper balance between mass and class—the cravenly popular and the artistically inclined—was an issue of ongoing industrial concern throughout the 1953–68 period.

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Given the almost exclusive focus on textual readings in previous horror-film research, Heffernan's industrial approach is welcome, but readers wishing to focus on the political meanings of horror would do well to read the revised edition of *Planks of Reason*. The first academic anthology on horror cinema when it was originally published in 1984, this book remains (with Grant's edited volume, *The Dread of Difference: Gender and the Horror Film* [1996]) one of the best on the topic. The 2004 edition includes new essays on *The Tingler*, Corman's Poe adaptations, the yuppie horror film, and the recent growth of Japanese horror films. Unfortunately, the book's price tag will deter its adoption for classroom use.

The volume was originally inspired by the "Golden Age" of 1970s horror, as epitomized by the films of George A. Romero, Tobe Hooper, Larry Cohen, and Wes Craven. The authors contend in their new introduction that horror has gone downhill ever since, sacrificing social critique to big "boo's" and computer-generated special effects. It is hard to disagree, but it would be helpful to have an entire essay devoted to this topic, perhaps an expansion of the short piece on neoconservative horror films which Sharrett published in Jon Lewis's *The End of Cinema as We Know It: American Film in the Nineties* (2002). Still, Grant's new contribution does convey a major shift in horror films of the 1980s and 90s, when yuppies were under siege in films like *Fatal Attraction* (1987) and *The Hand that Rocks the Cradle* (1992). "It is less life than 'lifestyle' that is threatened" in the wake of Reaganomics (166), when "to be underfunded is more frightening than being undead" (162).

The first edition of *Planks of Reason* left readers wondering how we got from the Universal classics of the 1930s to the ideologically challenging classics of the 1970s, and this makes the new essays on Corman and Castle particularly important. *Ghouls, Gimmicks and Gold* also fills in this historical gap by taking seriously many films that have previously been dismissed. Though the point is not always explicit, Heffernan makes it clear that some of the most important horror films have been undervalued because they blatantly targeted an infantile (if not technically young) audience. But films like *The House on Haunted Hill* (1958), *Premature Burial* (1962), and *Pit and the Pendulum* (1961) were hardly lacking in adult themes. The "kids'" films of the 1950s and 60s teemed with disastrous heterosexual coupling, crumbling families, and hysterical, failed masculinity. If full of cheap thrills, they also engaged with ideas that would be more fully developed in classics like *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), which D.N. Rodowick analyzes in *Planks of Reason*.

With a handful of exceptions—*They Live!* (1988), *The Stepfather* (1987)—horror took a turn towards the Right (or at least the apolitical) in the 1980s and has since devolved into little more than a showcase for the latest digital imagery. When A-list actors like Halle Berry and Jennifer Connelly start showing up in horror films, you can be sure that these mass-appeal films will also be full of class. Sharrett and Grant would no doubt prefer films full of *ideas about class*, like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* (1974). One hopes that rumors of the death of the politically conscious horror film have been greatly exaggerated. If *George A. Romero's Land of the Dead* (2005) teaches us anything, it is that genres that appear moribund can always come back from the grave. The best ones will lunge straight towards both your brain and your heart.

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Reading *Kung Fu Cult Masters*, it is difficult not be impressed by Leon Hunt's contagious enthusiasm, his detailed knowledge of generic and regional subtleties and differences, the readability of his writing, and his analysis of the impact of digital technology on the genre. But the author is not just an afficianado. As film scholar he is theoretically informed, drawing on and debating a number of prominent film scholars in this area, including Ackbar Abbas, Stephen Teo, and David Bordwell. One important sign of the author's expertise is his tracing of the evolution of the genre in its representational means and in social and political history. For example, martial arts (*wu xia*) films depict chivalry and swordplay as well as a northern, mainland style evocative of ancient tradition and history. By contrast, the kung fu films of Hong Kong developed by incorporating western, urban subcultural aesthetics, resulting in the merger of hip hop and kung fu (as well as *The Matrix* [1999], kung fu-inspired and set in a postmodern metropolis). Originating in Hong Kong, the new style also derives from the exploits of mythical southern heroes and gives rise to a tradition of charismatic stars. Thus Hong Kong kung fu is both local and global.

Framed at both ends by questions of authenticity—national, regional, linguistic, body-kinetic, or simulacral—the middle of the book offers readings of the kung fu subgenres, ranging from the tradition of the Shaolin Temple to kung fu comedy with drunken masters, gender-bending female fighters, the new wave, and diasporic productions. The question of authenticity entails issues of identity—national, cultural, regional. Hunt, however, is less interested in identity-derived authenticity than in another, newer kind of authenticity, derived from performance, choreography, digitized shapes, and kinetic flourishes of the human body that propel kung fu masters into stardom. He seems to claim that authenticity lies in the ever-changing intimacy between technology and martial-

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arts discipline that results in the mass production of spectacular images of the amazing human body.

Although kung fu films are inseparable from the power of the performative body, they cannot help being implicated in the history of the body politic and of geopolitical conflict. Events like the Vietnam War, the Hong Kong handover, Third World independence movements, colonial legacies, and expansion of global capital haunt and trouble the power display of the body. These contexts repeatedly seep into the author's discussion of generic features. The film *Enter the Dragon* (1973), for instance, has Vietnam on its mind. Its narrative seeks to secure an unstable territory and alludes to Nixon's visit to China. *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* (1974) makes implicit reference to how globalization proceeds from the notion of continued western (and specifically British) colonialism. But, while presenting various anti-colonial readings, Hunt is resistant to the political approach. Quoting Abbas, he observes that kung fu films never offer a direct critique of colonialism. The ethos of male heroism and personal prowess so basic to the genre has to define itself in relation to a wide array of possibilities in a changing colonial situation. Now what are the possibilities? One is kung fu's encounter with Western technological modernity. The genre flourishes and grows by negotiating the complex and conflicting experience of colonial modernity and postcoloniality.

In this give and take, Hunt asks, who is taking advantage of whom? Who is appropriating whom? The author regularly touches on this kind of question and then sidesteps it by resorting to the aesthetics of the body or performance or production values. One does not have to worry about national questions, he suggests; it is good enough to see how, in a film composed of elements from East and West, different and hybrid studio styles converge, each carving out distinctive generic worlds. Dracula and Van Helsing in *Legend of the 7 Golden Vampires* do not support a critique of colonialism but rather the notion that colonialism can take bad and good forms, that it can be rapacious and cruel, but also beneficial and "civilizing." This view plays into the postcolonial, globalist illusion that cultural exchange creates a win-win situation for all involved. Hesitant to engage with problems of power imbalance, Hunt takes refuge in the seemingly apolitical subjects of kung fu stars' athleticism and popularity.

In chapters 7 and 8 this aesthetic trumping of politics moves into a hybrid synthesis of conflicted geopolitical relations. The author notes that a "Hong-kongification" of American cinema has generated a marvel like *The Matrix*, which has established a new standard for rendering Hollywood more Asian. This is not just a global "East meets West" utopia, but one of Hong Kong meeting technology. It is not just a matter of combining stars from different industries, but of converging aesthetics and technologies. *The Matrix* arguably established a new template for the "Asianization" of Hollywood—Hong Kong choreography combined with what Hymes calls "our technology" (157), such as CGI. If aesthetics can transcend boundaries, one wonders why technology is dubbed "our." Conversely, the author lets the question of geopolitical power come to the fore and asks the pointed questions about kung fu in Hollywood: how do Chinese stars fare in a national cinema that has traditionally marginalized Asians? Is it possible to imagine an embryonic Chinese American action aesthetic or has Hong Kong talent simply fallen into the insatiable appetite of the globalizing cultural industry? Again the assertion of a win–win scenario is dubious.

Kung Fu Cult Masters concludes with a discussion of the phenomenal Chinese entry into Hollywood, exemplified by the success of Ang Lee's *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and Zhang Yimou's *Hero* (2002). Colonial (I do not think we are postcolonial) readings of *Hero* emphasize its exoticized representation of China's past, which does not challenge Western stereotypes of the Orient. Hunt again points the other way to the film's breathtaking action scenes, as if to override the problem of grandiose neo-Orientalism: the spectacular display of stunning choreography, wirework, computer-generated images, and athletic skill against a backdrop of bamboo forests, quaint taverns, and the rooftops of imperial Beijing. In this visual splendor, we are treated to a breezy, transnational combination platter: "it is not 'East and West' which are overcome, but 'past' and 'future,' technology and the performing body" (182).

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Shooting Cowboys and Indians: Silent Western Films, American Culture, and the Birth of Hollywood

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John Ford and the American West

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Considering that the Western was the dominant genre of the American cinema during the early silent years, it is surprising that no full-length study has yet been devoted to its history, with the exception of *L'Alliance brisée: le western des années 1920* (1998) by Jean-Louis Leutrat, still sadly untranslated into English. Andrew Brodie Smith's book is therefore very welcome. It's a detailed account of the production of Westerns from the beginnings of cinema through the teens and into the 1920s, reviewing the work of the major production companies and individuals prominent in the field.

Smith traces the origins of the Western film back to a marriage—astutely engineered by the Selig company, Gilbert "Broncho Billy" Anderson, and others—between the vogue for scenic films displaying the wonders of the Western landscape and the popularity of early crime films. Following the work of previous scholars such as Robert Anderson and, more recently, Richard Abel, Smith pays attention to the im-

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Considering that the Western was the dominant genre of the American cinema during the early silent years, it is surprising that no full-length study has yet been devoted to its history, with the exception of *L'Alliance brisée: le western des années 1920* (1998) by Jean-Louis Leutrat, still sadly untranslated into English. Andrew Brodie Smith's book is therefore very welcome. It's a detailed account of the production of Westerns from the beginnings of cinema through the teens and into the 1920s, reviewing the work of the major production companies and individuals prominent in the field.

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portant role of authentic Western scenery (at this time largely the Rocky Mountains; the desert came later) in providing a unique selling point for American producers in their competition against foreign imports. But this is only one of a number of factors that he draws together in his history. What is admirable about his method is the way it shows the interaction between a host of factors that together determine the way in which the Western developed. These include the nature of the emerging studio system, the pull between different centers of production at the time (not only Los Angeles but Chicago and New York), the reception of the films, which includes both audience response and the various campaigns waged by pressure groups, not to mention wider historical forces such as evolving attitudes towards the Indian, and the social construction of masculinity in late Victorian and early twentieth-century America. And of course he does not ignore the unique contribution of individuals.

In weaving together these strands, Smith is able to make careful distinctions between different types of Westerns. Thus he shows that the Broncho Billy films were partly a response to widely expressed concerns over the violence and lawlessness associated with films about outlaws such as Jesse James. By introducing Christian values (Broncho Billy almost invariably starts off outside the law but his innate goodness ensures a happy outcome) and a softer side (Billy often shows his paternal instincts), Anderson's films appealed to a middle-class audience. By contrast, the Bison films made by Thomas Ince adopted a different strategy while seeking a similar aim, to go upmarket when the industry saw its future as rising above the cheap entertainment offered to poor spectators. Ince improved production values with higher budgets and more spectacular mise-en-scène, making use of extensive location work and employing genuine Indians and props from a Wild West show. The resulting historical spectaculars such as *Custer's Last Fight* (1912) connected the Western to the triumphalist nationalism fostered by Teddy Roosevelt, Owen Wister, and other ideologues of the "winning of the west."

Smith has an important chapter on the films made by Indian director James Young Deer and his wife Red Wing, which offered something different either from Broncho Billy or from Ince's productions. Young Deer's films for Pathé challenged the prevailing prejudice against miscegenation evident in such productions as Cecil B. DeMille's *The Squaw Man* (1914), in which integration between whites and Indians is seen as, ultimately, impossible. In many of Young Deer's films Indian heroes achieve a happy ending with their white women companions although, after a while, it seems, there was a reaction against such films.

Smith's later chapters on William S. Hart and the cowboy stars of the 1920s such as Tom Mix and Buck Jones are perhaps less original, though he still has useful things to say about the relation between the organisation of the studio system (with its desire to maximize profits while positioning itself favorably in relation to Establishment opinion), the audience (increasingly rural and male), and wider social currents favouring a more rugged and manly hero. It's only at this point that Smith's judgment seems to falter, when he generalizes that the B-Westerns of the 1930s and 40s continue this trend. In fact, as Peter Stanfield and others have shown, the films of Gene Autry and others of this period made a consistent attempt to appeal to a female audience.

Smith's style is serviceable rather than eloquent, but he shows a sure command of his sources and has a firm grip on his conceptual model, though when he strays outside it, venturing to quote Steve Neale on the psychoanalytic aspects of masculinity, he surely misunderstands. The pictures are unfortunately muddy and indistinct and there is, surprisingly, no bibliography. But anyone wanting to understand the key role of the Western in the growth of the film industry will need to read this book.

By contrast, the illustrations in Peter Cowie's book are splendidly chosen and reproduced, but it is not clear for whom the text is written. It doesn't add a great deal to what has been said about John Ford in a score of previous books. Cowie's method is to place stills from Ford's Westerns alongside American paintings of the nineteenth century by Bierstadt, Remington, Russell, and others, and this certainly produces some telling juxtapositions. But he does not go very deeply into the potential meanings generated. Unlike Smith, Cowie does have a bibliography, but it's a very short one. It's hard not to make a point here without blowing my own trumpet, but he doesn't seem aware of my own article on Ford and Remington, recently republished in *John Ford Made Westerns* (2001), an anthology edited by Gaylyn Studlar and Matthew Bernstein, nor one on Ford's use of Monument Valley, anthologized in *The Western Reader* (1998), edited by Jim Kitses and Gregg Rickman. He does include my monograph on *Stagecoach* (1992), though it doesn't save him from misattributing Doc Boone's Marlowe quotation ("Is this the face . . .") to *Tamburlaine* rather than *Dr Faustus*. Cowie doesn't seem to know about the recently discovered silent Ford Western *Bucking Broadway* (1917) and omits it from his checklist of Ford's Westerns (though this includes, oddly, *Young Mr Lincoln* [1939]). And in discussing the infamous episode with "Look" in *The Searchers* (1956), which he calls "hilarious," he ignores the considerable body of commentary on these scenes by Peter Lehman and others.

Cowie does, however, make good use of the painstaking researches of the industrious Carlo Gaberscek, an Italian who for over twenty years has been tracking down the actual locations for Western movies, especially those of John Ford. Cowie has a lyrical passage about Ford's use of Monument Valley in *Cheyenne Autumn* (1964), which he seems, rightly, to consider an undervalued film. But ultimately this is a missed opportunity. There is surely much more to be said about Ford's relationship to Remington, for example, but Cowie's knowledge of the latter must be sketchy if he believes that the artist painted many more cowboys than soldiers. Remington's affection for the military was, like Ford's himself, central to his life.

EDWARD BUSCOMBE is the author of volumes on *Stagecoach*, *The Searchers,* and *Unforgiven* in the BFI Classics series as well the BFI Screen Guide, *100 Westerns* (2006).

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Alien Sex: The Body and Desire in Cinema and Theology

By Gerard Loughlin. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004. $68.95 cloth; $31.95 paper. 306 pages.

Elegantly written, Gerald Loughlin's *Alien Sex: The Body and Desire in Cinema and Theology* combines extensive knowledge of Christian theological materials relating to sexuality, the body, gender, and desire with careful analysis, informed by film scholarship, of cinematic texts. Loughlin describes his project as the articulation of a "cinematic theology," an approach that "attends to the practices of cinema and the language of film in order to think theologically with and through cinema" (xx). His central argument is that erotic language and experiences of bodily pleasure, far from being foreign to Christian discourses of the sacred, have often been used as guides to understanding the ecstatic rupture and rapture that characterizes union with the divine. As Loughlin demonstrates throughout the book, the Christian tradition should not be understood as monolithically anti-body and anti-sex.

Some of Loughlin's chapters are more concerned with films than others. In the introduction, in which he sets out his central thesis that the "alien" desires of the body have not always been understood as inimical to knowledge of the sacred within the Christian tradition, Loughlin does an excellent job of balancing analysis of Christopher Nolan's *Memento* (2000), exposition of elements in the work of Roland Barthes and Emmanuel Levinas, and close reading of Christian mystical writing. The same balance is achieved in the chapter where Loughlin discusses the *Alien* series of films and the incarnation of the divine in female bodies. The book's closing chapters, which focus on Nicholas Roeg's *The Man Who Fell to Earth* (1976) and Derek Jarman's *The Garden* (1990), respectively, enhance our understanding of these films. But other chapters are less successful. In his discussion of the *Alien* series, for example, while giving *Alien*^{3} (1992) and *Alien Resurrection* (1997) a level of attention they rarely receive, Loughlin does little to extend the work of Barbara Creed which serves as his primary guide to the films. Other chapters do even less justice to the films under consideration. The discussion of Ken Russell's *The Devils* (1971), for example, in the context of an argument about the connections between Hans Urs von Balthasar's trinitarian theology and theological anthropology, is limited to an account of how the relationship between Grandier (Oliver Reed) and Madeleine (Gemma Jones) might be seen as a model of the mutual reinforcement of eroticism and mysticism. The account is of limited interest and the same is true of the readings of *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) and *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).

Loughlin's book includes a prefatory essay, an introductory overview, and eight additional chapters. At the conclusion of his preface, Loughlin provides an explanation for how the chapters were grouped into the four parts that comprise the book by articulating the theme that ostensibly organizes each section. Except for the introductory essay, the ordering and organization of the remaining chapters seems fairly arbitrary. The chapters read much more like independent essays than a sustained argument. Introduced with a black-and-white still from the film being discussed, each chapter focuses on some issue revolving around the intersection of eroticism, the body, and the divine presence. In each chapter, Loughlin engages in a close reading of the relevant theological materials and a thematically similar cinematic text.

In many ways, Loughlin's book stands head and shoulders above the existing literature in the expanding field of religion and film scholarship. Loughlin has a sophisticated and sympathetic understanding of film-studies literature; commendably, he discusses films with attention to their specific nature as visual artifacts, as opposed to narratives that happen to be set forth in images. Loughlin also avoids the typical apologetic move common to authors in religious studies who are approaching film as a religious phenomenon or theological resource; Loughlin appeals to cinematic texts without spending any time wringing his hands about whether this is a legitimate move. Finally, in several places in the book, Loughlin follows through on the promise from his prefatory essay and allows the films being analyzed to speak theologically. In these ways, Loughlin's book serves as a model for future scholars writing about the intersection of theology and film theory, although, in the final analysis, his principal concerns are theological rather than cinematic.

KENT L. BRINTNALL is a doctoral student in the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University, working on the intersection of theories of cinematic violence and theologies of the crucifixion.
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Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory

Edited by Marijke de Valck & Malte Hagener. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2005. 75.00 cloth; $29.95 paper, 238 pages.

This collection of academic essays considers how cinephilia is evolving in the age of the Internet, "Home Cinema," and the blockbuster bootleg. It is a stimulating and timely book. When we think about cinephilia nowadays, the benchmark is the the movie love of the *Cahiers du cinéma* and *Positif* crowd. For Anglo-Saxon critics and filmgoers, post-war cinephilia was typically, deliciously French. In her influential February 1996 *New York Times* piece "The Decay of Cinema," Susan Sontag proclaimed the purity of the Parisian model, with its quest for the obscure Boetticher or Dwan discovered in the Studio des Ursulines or the MacMahon. But for de Valck and Hagener, Sontag was mistaking the passing of the conditions that enabled classical cinephilia for the end of cinema itself. "The Death of Cinema" is a familiar plaint from

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writers of a certain generation; it is audible in Peter Cowie's dewy reminiscence of the 1960s, *Revolution!* (2004), and David Thomson's *New Biographical Dictionary of Film* (2002), with its scant attention to Wong Kar-wai. Reading the essays in *Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory*, you realize that the modern cinephile is not only better served by a wider range of movies, but may also be more discerning in certain respects.

What has always been at stake for cinephilia in whatever era is recollection. In Thomas Elsaesser's opening piece, the term "reverberates with nostalgia and dedication, with longings and discrimination." And disenchantment. As Paris-style film love gave way to 1970s film theory, there arose a Barthesian regret: "love tainted by doubt and ambivalence, ambivalence turning into disappointment, which demanded a public demonstration or exhorted confession of 'I love no more.'" In the 1950s, the cinephile was always vulnerable; the latest Aldrich, Preminger, or Losey might not be as good as the last. But disappointment enabled the cinephile to individuate the experience, restoring selfhood before the seductions of Hollywood illusion. Contemporary cinephilia is, for Elsaesser, characterized by stress and distress. Aware that the plenitude of the image is finite, the new cinephile compensates with too much. The extreme close nup, wipes, pans, video, DVD, downloads, clips: modern imagery flows by in a blur of perpetual motion, nothing privileged so no sense of self-presence. Aware of the fragility of the image, the new cinephile collects and relives, aiming for a sense of self in the moment of reiteration. Forever key to cinephilia's poignancy, the place, occasion, and moment of watching is central to Lucas Hilderbrand's piece on conceptual artist Jon Routson's bootlegged multiplex fare.

Contemporary cinephilia revels in a range of practices, from the atomized spectator before the DVD player to nocturnal networks around the chat room. Modern cinephilia can also be traced to what Elena Gorfinkel calls "the film historical imaginary." After classical cinephilia fed into the 1970s New Hollywood generation's penchant for allusion, in recent Hollywood films like *Boogie Nights* (1997), *The Royal Tenenbaums* (2001), and *Far from Heaven* (2002), modern auteurs Paul Thomas Anderson, Wes Anderson, and Todd Haynes imagine the cinematically anachronistic "as a means of highlighting the pathos of historical difference. The poignancy of the irrecoverable gap between past and present—between the 1950s, the 1970s, and today, and between childhood and adulthood—becomes the subject of these films." By doing so, *Far from Heaven*, for example, invites the spectator to engage affectively, and critically, with the aesthetics and political particulars of Haynes's evocation of 1950s manners and mores.

In Melis Behlil's essay on cinephilia and the online film community, she focuses on the *New York Times* forums, addressing an issue key to the "Death of Cinema" discourse: going to the movies versus watching movies at home. The growth of domestic delivery systems since the 1980s has made the dutiful excursions of classical cinephilia seem more anachronistic than ever. I am slightly older than Behlil, who was born into the tail end of high cinephilia. But there are many among my generation who preferred the controllable domestic settings of the pre-video broadcast era to the prospect of uncomfortable, sometimes chaotic, pre-multiplex spectatorship. Jonathan Rosenbaum and Adrian Martin's *Movie Mutations* (2003) was an important recent work which invoked the claims of cinema attendance versus DVD immersion. De Valck and Hagener criticize that book for putting its trust exclusively in projected celluloid and the festival. But although I agree that *Movie Mutations* plots an unapologetically arthouse path through contemporary cinephilia, Rosenbaum draws a favorable comparison between the DVD-buying cinephile and the cinephilia of his youth. By comparison, de Valck and Hagener's notion of "videosyncrasy" challenges the medium specificities of "telephilia" and "videophilia," catching the sense in which modern cinephiles idiosyncratically traverse a panoply of technologies and subject positions to generate fresh cinephilic communities.

RICHARD ARMSTRONG is an Associate Tutor affiliated to the British Film Institute. *Understanding Realism* (BFI Publishing) appeared in 2005.

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BOOK NOTES

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Kurland, Jeffrey and Deborah Nadoolman Landis, *50 Designers/50 Costumes: Concept to Character*. Los Angeles: Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, 2004. $24.95 paper. 124 pages. In her introduction to the exhibition catalogue for *50 Designers/50 Costumes: Concept to Character*, Deborah Nadoolman Landis makes an important point that many scholars neglect to stress in its simplest incantation: "Costumes are never clothes." And here Nadoolman, both a working designer and president of the Costume Designers Guild, is in no way rehashing the tiresomely semantic distinction between the terms costume, dress, clothing, and fashion. Plainly, Nadoolman is reminding us that "costumes are designed to appear in two dimensions on film, which flattens and distorts the image," and thus in function, and by necessity, construction, have less in common with clothes than we might normally assume. As a maker, Nadoolman foregrounds media and materials when she writes, "What's pretty in person may not be pretty on screen, needing the enhancement of color, texture or silhouette to 'read' on camera . . . Floral wallpaper, burgundy herringbone upholstery—even the turquoise of the BMW the actor is driving—are entered into the design equation." It is on this salient point that the most in-

writers of a certain generation; it is audible in Peter Cowie's dewy reminiscence of the 1960s, *Revolution!* (2004), and David Thomson's *New Biographical Dictionary of Film* (2002), with its scant attention to Wong Kar-wai. Reading the essays in *Cinephilia: Movies, Love and Memory*, you realize that the modern cinephile is not only better served by a wider range of movies, but may also be more discerning in certain respects.

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teresting revelations about the fifty contemporary costumes in this text are based, as each established designer discusses the research, design, and production processes of one of their more noteworthy creations. To make certain the web-spinning silhouette in *Spider-Man* (2002) had enough definition against the nocturnal sky, James Acheson fitted Tobey Maguire's Millaskin bodysuit with laminated foam pectorals and over seventy silkscreen prints that further reinforced the superhero's musculature. To help audiences distinguish the central Armenians of *Ararat* (2002), Beth Pasternak gave each ethnic group a defined palette based on the rich spices of the Mediterranean region. And to ensure that the bloody script on the Marquis de Sade's *peau de soie* suitcoat stayed convincingly crimson in the film *Quills* (2000), Jacqueline West tempered cow's blood and red tempera with a bit of pinot noir.

Rather than disintegrate into trivia, such details serve to emphasize just how painstakingly creative and involved costume design actually is. One has the sneaking suspicion while reading many of the creators' stories, particularly those who are responsible for films set in the contemporary era, that this exhibition was curated partly to remind audiences of this seemingly "invisible" art, as well as to counter the prevailing presumption that "modern costumes are 'shopped' by designers, reaching the screen unaltered, with fashion labels intact." When I saw the superfly coat worn by Penny Lane in *Almost Famous* (2000), I simply assumed the film was styled by skilled vintage scroungers. But working à la Dietrich, Betsy Hermann and her cinematographer actually tested dozens of shades of cream to see which fur would best frame and light Kate Hudson's face. Likewise, for *Fight Club* (1999), Michael Kaplan "broke vintage buttons, sanded and scratched fabrics" and even stapled tags onto collars to imbue Brad Pitt's clothes with thrift-store authenticity. As Nadoolman says in her closing, "designers work hard to make it look so easy." Certainly, these fifty costumes prove that's no understatement.

This richly imaged publication, which includes fifty designer sketches and the resultant on-screen costumes, is written for a general audience, but would also be an excellent supplementary text for a college-level course in costume design or film production.

ALISIA CHASE

Sergei, Gianluca. *The Dolby Era: Film Sound in Contemporary Hollywood*. Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 2004. $74.95 cloth; $24.95 paper. 208 pages. Intermittently useful and occasionally illuminating, *The Dolby Era* is more a hagiography and prolegomenon than a substantial and developed contribution to the extant scholarly literature on film sound. The subjects of the hagiography are Ray Dolby and Ioan Allen, the main founders of Dolby Labs and the progenitors of what Sergei calls (with good reason) "the Dolby Era" (which begins in the early 1970s and continues to the present moment). The prolegomenon calls for (rather than actually delivering) a more highly specific, nuanced, and technologically informed vocabulary and critical analysis of film sound. Since it is clear that Sergei has the knowledge and analytic framework with which to respond to his own call, the great disappointment of *The Dolby Era* is that so much of the book is devoted to a critique of "academic" scholarship on film sound and the repetition of historical events; it provides far too little of the concrete examples and sustained discussion it is promoting. Part of this problem lies with the volume's loose organization: historical/analytic chapters focused on a critical rehearsal of academic sound theory and on "suggestions" for more illuminating sound analysis are interspersed with chapters of Sergei's "verbatim" interviews with Dolby, Allen, and two major sound practitioners, sound editor Bruce Stambler (*The Fugitive*, *Batman Forever*, *Clear and Present Danger*, *The Fast and the Furious*, *xXx*) and sound designer Gary Rydstrom (*Titanic*, *Terminator 2*, *Toy Story, Saving Private Ryan*, *Finding Nemo*). Sergei's expressed aim here is to bring academic scholarship into dialogue with accounts of actual film practice but this strategy results in unnecessary repetition of historical and technical data—as well as of the author's one-note criticism of the lack of significant scholarship on film sound, particularly in relation to contemporary cinema.

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and following the production and release of *Citizen Kane*. Like Benjamin Ross's *RKO 281: The Battle Over Citizen Kane* (1999), the docudrama that tells the story of the making of *Citizen Kane*, Walsh's book is engaging and seems reliable enough. Walsh's strongest argument, that Hearst was particularly dastardly in his campaign against *Kane* and even went so far as to "fix" the 1942 Academy Awards, reads very dramatically. Yet what can one really do with a work that seems more concerned with being "a good read" than anything else? Due to Walsh's approach, it is difficult to recommend this book as a reliable resource or guide for someone who wants to research or study Welles, Hearst, or *Kane* specifically or, more generally, Hollywood in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

In fairness, the book has supplemental notes and an extended bibliography. At the same time, Walsh chooses to associate his supplemental notes to page numbers in his text as opposed to specific passages or sections. It would be difficult for a scholar to take advantage of the evidence presented in *Walking Shadows* should he or she wish to delve deeper on issues covered in the book. Similarly, it doesn't appear that Walsh's supplemental notes or bibliography contain any real "finds" such as previously unpublished interviews or correspondence. The works he derives his story from are a combination of secondary studies, such as biographies on Kane and Hearst, and primary source materials, including trade writings from the period around the production of *Kane*.

One could fill several shelves with books on Orson Welles, William Randolph Hearst, and *Citizen Kane,* so any new work is inevitably compared to and situated among them. Alongside the many works already out there, Walsh's book is an unconventional and enjoyable read while at the same time, as advertised, less concerned with being a scholarly work.

JOHN FRANKFURT

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Special feature on *Brokeback Mountain*, with contributions from:

Chris Berry
Joshua Clover & Christopher Nealon
Jim Kitses
D.A. Miller
B. Ruby Rich
Robin Wood